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SKETCHES OF A TOUR
IN
EGYPT
AND
PALESTINE.







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SKETCHES OF A TOUR

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EGYPT AND PALESTINE.

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SKETCHES OF A TOUR
IN
EGYPT AND PALESTINE,

DURING THE SPRING OF 1856.

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PREFACE.

THIS little Work is presented to the public as a faithful representation of the writer's feelings on visiting, for the first time, scenes so replete with interest, without any pretension to give a full description of them. To those who have already visited these countries, it can of course offer nothing new ; but if it recall pleasant hours spent there, or induce others to undertake the journey, the writer's aim will be more than accomplished.



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S K E T C H
OF A
TOUR IN EGYPT AND PALESTINE
DURING THE SPRING OF 1856.

CHAPTER I.

MARSEILLES—ALEXANDRIA—CAIRO.

OUR party consisted of two ladies and a gentleman, an invalid not capable of much exertion, which will account for many interesting localities being left unvisited. We had an excellent and experienced European courier, who had travelled several years in the East, and was quite *au fait* at all the necessary arrangements which so much conduce to comfort in those countries.

We reached Marseilles, from Paris, on the afternoon of the 12th March, putting up at the Hotel Beau-

vau, where we made the acquaintance of Mr G——, who had recommended our servant to us, and was himself an experienced Eastern traveller. In the course of the evening he gave us much valuable information regarding our route and the countries we were about to visit; and the following morning (13th March) accompanied us on board the steamer "Nil," a fine, roomy boat of the Messageries Imperiales, on board of which we had taken our passage to Alexandria. The morning was brilliant and balmy, and the blue Mediterranean looked deceitfully calm. Our fellow passengers were few in number:—Mr L——, who had been twice to Australia, and was now bound to Jerusalem, which had always been a dream of his youth; a French merchant and his bride returning to Beyrout; three young Syrians, wearing the fez; and a poor devotee, who was going to Jerusalem as a true pilgrim.

Sailing past the Chateau d'If and Quarantine Island, we saw Toulon and Hyères, and, after rather a rolling night, were not sorry to find ourselves in the Straits of Bonifacio about noon on Friday.

It was a lovely day. Corsica on the left, and Sardinia on the right hand, and in front of us the two singularly shaped rocks resembling a bear in a standing posture, which give to the passage the name of the "Pas de l'Ours." Wild horses and cows were also seen feeding on the bare and rocky shores; and the whole scenery of the Sardinian coast, with its

background of small glens and picturesque hills, is much to be admired.

The following day (15th), in sight of Maretimo, a bold, rocky island off the western coast of Sicily, with a small fortress on a projecting crag, which was formerly used as a Neapolitan state prison. Sicily lay further off, its shores appearing low. Towards evening there was a pearl-like beauty in the tints on the distant heights. We retired to rest confidently expecting to reach Valetta harbour in time for church the next morning, though the "commandant" dexterously parried our cross-questioning with the characteristic caution of his position; and indeed Sunday morning ushered in a gale from the north-east, which increased with such rapidity as to make it unsafe to attempt entering the harbour of Malta, though within sight of it; and we were obliged to run for shelter under Gozzo, where we lay-to for twenty-four hours, until the gale moderated. There were four other steamers in the same situation as ourselves, besides small sailing craft. The weather was so thick that at times we could scarcely see the length of the vessel; and the strength of the wind such that the driving spray actually forbade our looking to windward. The Post-office agent (the commissaire), being anxious to forward the mails, prevailed on the captain to try to put him on shore at a small harbour to the south of the island, named Marsa Sirocco; and the poor

"Medecin" who had been doomed to land with him looked the picture of despair. Accordingly the attempt was made; but after two hours' ineffectual buffeting with the heavy sea, which rolled in on us as soon as we left our shelter, it was found impossible, without seriously straining the vessel, to reach the mouth of the harbour; and even had that been effected, no boat could have landed, owing to the tremendous surf. The steamer was therefore put back; and we remained quietly in our snug berth under Gozzo all Sunday night; and early on Monday morning we found ourselves in Valetta harbour.

MALTA.

During the few hours to which our stay was limited—for we believed we were to be on board by four o'clock, having unfortunately left the vessel without ascertaining the exact hour from competent authority, which we afterwards bitterly regretted—but little time was available for sight-seeing. In rowing on shore, the Quarantine Harbour presented no very remarkable feature, beyond the dreaded, though well-built Lazaretto; and we entered the narrow, cool streets, overhung with closed balconies, and lined with cupboard-like shops, of which the only outward adornment was the living person of the artizan. A peep of blue sea at the end of the steep streets was picturesque; and we took up our temporary abode at Dunsford's Hotel,

in the Strada Reali—a curious building, containing small courts, den-like rooms, and broad staircases, the galleries across the courts prettily adorned with flowering plants.

The Governor's Palace, the residence of the Grand Masters of the Order of St John in times gone by, is well worth seeing. A grand staircase, leading to magnificent corridors, adorned with frescoes and curious paintings; the council-room, hung with Gobelin tapestry, presented by Louis XIV., unfaded by time; the curious clock, with figures of Moors to strike the hours, brought from Rhodes, and now fixed on a tower in the court, as seen from the windows; and the rich ceilings, were all most interesting. Thence we proceeded to the church of St John's, which is magnificently ornamented in Moorish style, and contains the tombs of the knights in its crypts. There are some splendidly sculptured monuments in the chapels above. The pavement of the church is of marvellous beauty, being entirely composed of the scutcheons of the knights, mingled with various allegorical devices, all imperishably executed in *pietra dura*. The church contains chapels for each European nation; and one of the high altars was ornamented with a gold railing on one side, and a silver one on the other. The former was carried off by Napoleon, and is now replaced by bronze; the silver one had been painted, and thus eluded his rapacity.

We bade adieu to the island barrack a little before four o'clock, and re-embarked amidst the usual rush of boatmen and beggars, and soon espied the "Nil," with steam up, and actually under way. The passengers received us with nervous welcome, and the captain so angry at being kept waiting since three, when the despatches came on board, that in another minute we must have been left behind. Our kind friends had been most urgent in their entreaties for a short delay, so we scrambled as fast as possible on board; but unfortunately the boat's painter gave way before even our small travelling bags, containing numerous articles of toilet, journals, and books, &c., could be handed up, so they, as well as two cases of stores for the Desert, and iron bedsteads, were left behind, and probably became the prey of the Maltèse boatmen; for the sea was running high, and the captain being afraid of his vessel going ashore if he stopped for an instant, by no possibility could the boat rejoin us.

From Malta to Alexandria our passage occupied four days, with an exceedingly rough sea and heavy swell, occasioned by the succession of gales which had been blowing for the last three weeks; so that there was but little inducement to leave one's berth and go on deck. At length, on the afternoon of Friday 21st, the low land of Egypt was descried from the mast-head, and before sunset the Pharos could be seen

from the deck ; but we were too late to enter the harbour that evening, and were obliged to lay-to all night. Whilst rolling in the trough of the sea on that afternoon, we beguiled the time by conversing with the "Commissaire" and "le Docteur," listening to the groans of the former, and to the refrain of "*C'est une triste vie que la navigation,*" and discussing the woes of priest-ridden countries with the good-humoured and intelligent "*Medecin.*"

ALEXANDRIA.

At dawn of day we entered the port, and could hear the roaring and fighting for luggage above, which made us dread the victimising we might have to encounter. A few drops of soft rain were falling when we emerged from our cabins ; but the sunshine made light of it ; and preceded by our courier, who was armed with a whip of buffalo hide, we went through the main body of half-naked Egyptians, who fought lustily for employment in our service even in the boat, so that we were over-manned by a greedy crew. Rowing past some fine ships of war displaying the crescent, we luxuriated in the soft motion and gentle plash of the oars—sweet repose after the increasing torment of the last few days. Gliding by a forest of latteen-rigged vessels, apparently the dwellings of the owners, we reached the landing place. Here another conflict ensued of shorter duration, and under

the wing of a guide, we walked through the broad cart-roads, called streets, winding with dream-like feelings amongst camels and donkeys, and strange beings of every description and variety of colour, and dirty wretched-looking shops on either hand, up to the European quarter—a “Grande Place,” with flat-roofed houses, and two large hotels. We were given, rather grudgingly, two rooms in the “Peninsular and Oriental,” one looking into the square, which gratified our curiosity by enabling us to watch the ever-varying scenes from the window. Conquering our steamer-like sensations, we valiantly wrote our letters, and took a drive in the afternoon to see the wonders of Alexandria. In our rough conveyance, drawn by two little ponies, and driven by a swarthy Egyptian in turban and loose garments, we set off, along uneven dusty roads, with palms and bananas at each side, and passing the English chapel, we reached the Turkish burying-ground, and saw the noble granite column miscalled Pompey’s Pillar. From the eminence on which the column stands we had a good view of the still lake Mareotis, of the shipping in the harbour, and white buildings of the modern town. The mounds of sand over a buried city on the other side presented a vast scene of desolation. We proceeded along the banks of the Mahmoudieh Canal—admiring the graceful sails of the boats on its surface, and saw the palaces of Ibrahim and Ismail Pasha on the banks,

but were not allowed to enter their gardens, as the ladies of the Hareem were walking in them. We passed a field of sugar-cane, the first we had seen; it was ripe and in process of cutting; by the time we had gone by the barracks and along the fortifications, low walls surmounting banks of sand, we experienced the hot wind of Egypt. It came from the north-east, and though in a mild form, our burning lips, and the sand flying about, made us thankful for our thick veils.

Cleopatra's Needle was pointed out—a beautiful obelisk covered with hieroglyphics, and seeming to stand almost by miracle, owing to the smallness of the foundation. Close by we observed a specimen of an Arab street, and the wretched people creeping in and out of their holes.

Easter Sunday, March 23.—Rose with aching bones off a hard sofa, having had but little rest from the united influences of mosquitoes, wild howling dogs, vociferating natives, and brilliant moonlight.

At half-past ten o'clock, to church—a large handsome building of Malta free-stone, just completed, at a cost, it is said, of £14,000—the interior neatly and comfortably fitted up, but no display, a good organ, and an indistinct preacher. A great number of the congregation stayed for the sacrament, and it was with feelings of solemnity, mingled with thankfulness, that we found ourselves in the land which had witnessed

so many of the wonders of Jehovah, and reflected on the "goodness and mercy," which had followed us from our own land, and brought us safely over the "great sea," permitting us once more to enter the courts of the Lord's house, albeit in a strange land. Our countrywomen were dressed Parisian fashion, and the open doors admitted all the various noises from without.

Illustrations of many Bible scenes were visible from the windows of our rooms looking out on the Grande Place. Now a man sheltering himself from the sun under the shadow of his camel, then arranging its "furniture," while the animal uttered pitiful groans, and, placing himself upon it, the camel rose, and they pursued their journey; then another, with his loose blue garment, girded with a red sash, running, as Elijah did, before the chariot, now a modern conveyance; anon some veiled woman, and a never-ending variety of donkeys, ridden alike by soldier, priest, and beggar. We had bananas for our luncheon. They grow in a green bunch of pod-shaped fruit, and are sweet and pleasant to the taste.

The water-jugs of Upper Egypt are used here; they are of a graceful shape, and greenish colour, and so porous that they empty themselves by imperceptible degrees into the saucer beneath, and cool the water to a delightful temperature.

The attendants at the *table d'hôte* are mostly natives,

as is the Cameriere, a tall man in white cotton; there is a bronze-coloured Egyptian boy as waiter, who is very picturesque, and all the attendants are summoned by clapping the hands. The lower orders of women are usually dressed in blue, and the ladies wear black silk or white cotton mantles and wide trowsers, with immense yellow slippers turned up at the toes; and the men have yellow and red silk handkerchiefs, loosely thrown over the head and neck to keep off the sun.

On Monday morning we had some heavy rain, but still sat with open windows enjoying the dry exhilarating warmth of Egypt—thermometer between 60° and 70° in our rooms. In the afternoon we contented ourselves with a quiet walk; but, as everybody rides here, and the carriages drive noiselessly along the sandy road, it behoves pedestrians to keep their eyes both behind and before, if they wish to avoid feeling the great hand of the rider upon their shoulder, and the donkey itself brushing past in unpleasant proximity.

On Tuesday, we made our first trial of an Egyptian railroad, which promised to take us to Cairo in seven hours, but, owing to various delays, mismanagement, and a strong Khamsein wind, we were nearly twelve in reaching our destination.

Leaving the hotel shortly after breakfast in the omnibus, in order to be in time for the train, supposed

to start at nine o'clock, and after the usual delays incident to every movement in this country, we got to the station, and were immediately locked up in a carriage, where, for upwards of an hour, we had full leisure to watch the curious array of people on the platform, running to and fro, and yelling as if they were mad.

Soon after starting, we passed some salt marshy ground and mud villages on the distant heights, or rather gentle elevations. The approach to some of the stations was picturesque—the groups in the large square, the palm-trees, camels, and other beasts of burthen, enlivening the prospect.

About noon the third station was reached, where the Mahmoudieh Canal joins the Nile, and where the latter is crossed in a small steamer. Here the confusion and noise were tremendous—a gale of wind blowing the sand in our faces, and an overwhelming crowd pushing down the steep bank to gain the narrow plank which led to the steamer's deck; and, to add to the uproar, we had a large detachment of soldiers also making their way on board, each laden with his cumbersome bedding on his back, and therefore totally unable either to make way, or to see who was in his way either front or rear. It was, indeed, a service of no little danger to cross that plank and avoid being pushed into the Nile, which, at this particular point, was running with a very strong current.

The steamer was much overcrowded, and, owing to wind and stream, we had to make several tacks up and down before reaching the opposite landing-place. Here the same scene was enacted, and right glad were we at length to reach the door of the temporary refreshment room, and to get some shelter from the stifling heat and blinding sand.

The gale increased in fury, and we were detained here for four hours waiting for a luggage-train from Cairo. Only a single line of rails being laid, this station is one of the principal crossing points. When we at length started, the sky was still much obscured by the lurid sand clouds ; but the wind had abated, and we passed through a beautifully cultivated country, rich in corn, barley, cotton, and clover—truly it looked like a field which the Lord had blessed ; and ever and anon there were strings of camels laden with bales, and asses bearing green forage, or else their gaily clothed riders ; palm-trees often bounded the horizon, and there were awkward-looking buffalos in sight. Caravanserais by the road side reminded one of Eastern customs, and seemed to afford slender protection from wind or weather. It was seven o'clock before we reached Grand Cairo, amid the same scene of confusion, screaming, roaring, and jostling on the platform, to which were added the blinding glare and sickly smell of huge torches. After fighting our way through crowds of donkey-boys and donkeys, omnibuses and carriages,

we managed to secure one of the latter, and drove to Shephard's Hotel, where we arrived just in time for a late dinner.

This house was an ancient palace, the walls very thick, and rooms lofty and well-proportioned. We found it clean, but the attendance and living very indifferent; and although there was an abundance of everything on the table, the meat was generally tough and badly cooked.

GRAND CAIRO.

Our stay here was extended to a fortnight, to enable the courier to make his preparations for crossing the Little Desert *via* El Arish to Jerusalem, to procure tents and camels, and lay in stores necessary for the march; and during this period we visited as many objects of interest as we could, principally under the guidance of Hadji Salim, an Arab, speaking English and Italian, who had been hired by our headman as under-dragoman to accompany us through the Desert to Jerusalem and Syria, and a very civil intelligent person we always found him.

THE BAZAARS.

Mounting the far-famed Cairo donkeys for the first time, we were agreeably surprised by the easy amble of the little animals; they are most tractable, and so well broken, that the effect of their pace on the rider

may be described as the nearest approach to that of sitting in an arm-chair.

At first we entered broad streets, latticed over and partly covered with matting, cool and pleasant. But who shall describe the wonders of the bazaars themselves! Every sort of beautiful manufacture in the shape of embroideries and gorgeous stuffs, with many-coloured silks and calicos tastefully arranged; and at the same time is to be seen the industrious artizan working away at his trade, or else enjoying the calm delights of his long pipe, and fastening his philosophic gaze upon you. The dresses, the groups, the differences of feature and complexion, are very striking, and it seems a marvellous feat to thread one's way amongst such a mass of people in the narrowest conceivable space. The gold and silver bazaar is curious, and the countenance of the grand Turk relaxes into a smile as, from the strong box in front of his forge, he draws forth and exhibits the bracelets and ear-rings in which ladies delight.

Hadji Salim afterwards shewed us the large brass basins and covers from which water is poured on the hands, the bottles for rose-water, and brass utensils in which five dishes can be carried for dinner. We saw also some beautifully embroidered jackets for the Turkish ladies, blue wrought with gold.

Being anxious to see the Pyramids before sunset, we pressed on to the citadel, and, reserving for another

opportunity the inspection of the beautiful Mosque of Mohammed Ali, we reached our point just in time. What a rich and glorious prospect! A soft blue haze, through which the giant Pyramids rose majestically,—Grand Cairo at our feet, in tints of dark brown and brilliant white,—the graceful minarets, the arcaded palaces, the trees and swarming myriads of people, contributed to render it a scene of wondrous beauty and novelty. The vegetation beyond the mighty river extended nearly to the Pyramids, and then the horizon was bounded by the hazy line of the Desert of Lybia.

We saw the glorious orb disappear as if at sea; and then, descending from the citadel, heard the muezzin's call to prayer — his apparently tiny figure stretching out over the gallery of the lofty minaret. The carved gateways, coloured mosques, and painted devices over the doors, and the streets occasionally bridged overhead, give the city an air of antiquity and marvel of which no pen can convey an idea. The crocodile is a favourite charm over the fountains and entrances of houses. A few scattered lamps dimly lighted us on our return; and we enjoyed the delicious balmy sweetness of an Egyptian evening.

One of our favourite rides was to the gardens of Shooobra, about three miles from Cairo; the road being shaded the whole way by an avenue of magnificent plane and sycamore trees. The latter is unlike our

English species, but separates near the ground into many thick stems, well adapted for the purpose which Zaccheus had in view.

On either side the country is richly cultivated, fields of yellow rape, sugar-cane, barley, and plantations of olive-trees delighting the eye. About half a mile from Shoobra the everlasting Pyramids burst on the view, apparently of a bluish colour in the morning light; and this, combined with a fine sweep of the Nile at this point, with numerous lateen-rigged vessels in the foreground, and the rich foliage in the distance, make up a picture not easily forgotten.

The entrance to the palace gardens is through a handsome gateway covered with arabesque patterns, and a horse-shoe arch on each side; the gates themselves are brass, and of very elegant design in the same style.

The gardens are kept with great care, and the perfume of the orange-flowers delicious; the oranges themselves are of the best kind from Malta. The numerous flowers in pots and beds give the place a very gay appearance, and a trifle to the gardener insures a handsome bouquet on your leaving. Strolling gently through the pleasure until we reached the summer palace, and ascending the marble steps, we saw a true specimen of Oriental architecture. A broad marble gallery, the outer side of which is carved lattice-work, to admit the free current of air,

but to exclude the glare; the inner side, an open colonnade, resting on a large sheet of water. Luxurious divans are placed here and there: the ceilings are ornamented with frescoes, and the basement upon which the columns rest is elaborately sculptured to the water's edge—all the work of Italian artists. At the four corners are rooms, both public and private, gorgeously fitted up. The reception-saloon has a floor of polished marqueterie, of a very elegant pattern, gold embroidered furniture, a solid silver palm-tree serving as a chandelier, and another of coloured glass hanging in the centre of the room: Mohammed Ali's full-length portrait, by an Italian artist, is shown in the billiard-room. The expression of the old Pasha's countenance is too cunning to be pleasing, and as merely a work of art the picture has little merit.

Leaving Cairo by the Shoobra gate, and making a circuit of the walls of the city to the right, you reach the road to Suez,—wide and well beaten, and white and dazzling in the morning sun, with the sandhills of the Desert on the left, and groves of cactus, intermixed with young palms and tall tamarisks, on the right.

A short distance from the road, on the right hand, are the tombs of the "Caliphs," so called. The outside of the domes is covered with graceful arabesques. The tomb itself is in the centre of the building, under

loose stones, and a chain for a lamp hangs from the ceiling. The little oratory is a recess looking towards Mecca. At a short distance stands the mosque and tomb of Sultan Berkook,—a very ancient edifice. The arch nearly opposite the entrance was built like the Alhambra, with dropping ornaments. The interior is a large court, surrounded by a magnificent colonnade of rounded arches, with a well in the centre of the yard, for the purpose of ablutions. At each end of one of the cloisters are railed off the burial-place of the Sultan and that of his family. The domes are painted; and as we stepped over a “cartouche” (brought from Memphis), in leaving the building, we were shewn the ancient hieroglyphics on it. This being Friday, the Mohammedan Sabbath, many people were visiting the tombs of their friends in the modern burial-ground, even at the early hour of seven o’clock in the morning, giving alms to the poor, and evidently not doing it to be “seen of men.” Our dragoman gave some of his small coin to the donkey-boy to distribute.

ISLAND OF RHODA.

After proceeding about two miles on the road to Old Cairo, we crossed in the common ferry-boat, nearly opposite the southern point of the island, and walked past a palace built by Ibrahim Pasha, and round by some shell-work caves, until we reached the point itself, from whence there is a fine view down the Nile.

The river looked blue in the azure mists of morning, and behind us were the Pyramids, of which the very stones appeared distinct, so clear was the air.

In Ibrahim's time, all the ground in this vicinity was laid out as a garden, under a Scotch superintendent, but the present owner finds it more profitable to farm it, and already a great portion is under crop, and many people busy cutting down the gnarled fig and other fruit trees, and grubbing up their roots as cumberers of the ground. The northern point of the island is also occupied by a Pasha's summer palace and gardens, within whose inclosure is the famed "Nilometer," but to which access is always readily procured by means of a small gratuity to the gardener or porter.

In the centre of a square basin or cistern, faced with cut stone, with a flight of steps to the bottom, and communicating with the Nile, rises the venerable column, marked with plain, rudely cut lines, at different distances. On the sides of the cistern are four very old arched niches, and two ancient Cufic inscriptions running all round the walls at different heights, and thus forming two borders or friezes. The bottom of the cistern is full of the mud and green slime of the river. In 1854 the waters rose very high: last year was not such a good season. From the terrace of the palace itself there is a lovely view of the river: the village of Ghizeh on the right; Old Cairo on the left,

with its mass of picturesque boats, and the horizon bounded by palm-trees and the distant Pyramids of Abusir and Saccara resting on a clear azure sky.

Having recrossed by the ferry to Old Cairo, we passed under a long low vaulted Roman passage, through narrow streets, with Roman walls, antique doorways elaborately carved, and wooden doors of the same period, and reached the Coptic convent. Disturbing a "brother," wrapped in a coverlid, from his peaceful slumbers on a bench, we followed him into the church, which was small, but bore marks of great antiquity, with a wooden roof and carved screen; descending a few steps, the Virgin's Grotto is pointed out, where she is said to have rested after her flight into Egypt. The cave itself is curious, and supported by rudely formed columns. At ten minutes' ride from the convent, just outside the walls of the village, stands the ruined mosque of Amrah, containing three hundred and sixty-five marble columns within its enclosure. On the left hand side, near to the entrance, are two pillars close together, between which it is the popular belief that only a true believer can squeeze himself, and our dragoman shewed that he was of the orthodox faith by performing the feat, which, however, any slender person might attempt with every prospect of success. This building, which is supposed to have been erected before the close of the seventh century, is on the plan of all the early

mosques, viz., broad cloisters, supported on several rows of slender low pillars, surrounding a large open space, in the centre of which is a well for the purpose of ablution. This mosque is fast going to ruin; the roof is off the cloisters in many places, and a number of columns are lying prostrate on the ground. A curiously carved wooden pulpit is shewn, and a wonderful grayish marble pillar, with the mark of a whip thereon, given to it by the Prophet when he sent it flying from Mecca as a present to the Sultan. Religious service is now performed here only once a year, when the Pasha and people all congregate, and the Imam prays for the rising of the Nile.

The ride back is one of the pleasantest about Cairo, free from dust, and through fields of wheat, barley, sugar-cane, clover, and every produce of this rich and fertile land.

Mohammed Ali's mosque and tomb, as well as the public reception palace, are all situated in the citadel. On our way thither we met a marriage procession. A handsome boy, mounted on a white charger, beautifully caparisoned, the bride walking under a canopy, attended by numerous veiled ladies, and wearing a brilliant tiara of jewels over a thick red veil, which completely concealed her face. Musicians blowing trumpets, and making all sorts of discordant noises, brought up the rear.

The mosque containing the tomb of Mohammed

Ali is a handsome new building just finished, of Egyptian alabaster, with a noble dome, numerous lamps suspended by silver chains, two rows of galleries, a very high pulpit, and a desk for reading the Koran.

There was an air of solemn stillness, only broken by the distant sound of military music, which gently floated through the immense edifice, like the low strains of an unseen choir, or an Æolian harp. A cool clean matting covered the floor, with the exception of the south end, towards Mecca, over which handsome Turkey carpets were spread.

The lower windows of the mosque are of a square shape, the upper ones small, and fitted with stained glass, which greatly subdues the light. The tomb itself is in one corner, and enclosed by splendid bronze railings.

The palace stands in the midst of a small garden, full of geraniums, myrtles, and orange trees. The principal reception room is handsome, fitted up with luxurious divans all round, and an extra pile of cushions in the corner appropriated to the Pasha himself. The private dwelling apartments are simply furnished after the French style. Just outside the garden the guides shew the spot where the only Memlook who escaped the massacre leaped over the bastion to the street below.

Sultan Joseph's well, which furnishes the principal

supply of excellent pure water for the citadel, is nearly one hundred feet deep; and a wheel, worked by oxen, is continually going to raise it to the surface. Sultan Hassan's mosque is below the citadel, just outside the city gates. It is a fine building, of lofty proportions; but the beauties of Saracenic architecture, as seen in the elegant ornaments over the doorway, and a frieze round the open court, are fast crumbling away; the coloured marble pavement has become uneven, and the picturesque open fountain for the Arab, and the closed one for the Turkish ablutions, are visibly falling into decay. The great brazen doors opened to shew us the Sultan's tomb; and on the wall are two round metal plates,—the one marking the size, and the other the price, in Arabic, of the loaf of bread and pot of butter in those days. The tombs of the late Pasha's family are close to those of the Memlook Beg's outside the city. That of Ibrahim Pasha is the most gorgeous: he reposes under a splendid mausoleum of white marble, stained purple, and covered with ornamental gilding; the whole is said to have cost £40,000. All the wives and children of Mohammed Ali are buried here; the women's monuments are distinguished by a twist of hair on a part of the commemoration-tablet. The flooring of the whole building is covered with rich Turkey carpets.

THE PYRAMIDS.

We started at half-past six in the morning, and were almost frozen by the cold wind (4th April) ere we reached Old Cairo and the Nile. We crossed in a small boat to Ghizeh, and an hour and a half's ride, through Arab villages, and groves of palm-trees, and a richly cultivated country, brought us to the Pyramids. Long before we arrived, crowds of half-naked Arabs surrounded us, running, laughing, and shrieking, all anxious to be employed. As the day was very windy, it was deemed prudent that each one of the party should have three men to assist us in the ascent. The exertion was really tremendous, owing to the immense size of the stones, and the space between each, making the step sometimes upwards of four and never less than two feet. The crags of a mountain fastness could not be much steeper for an ordinary ascent. However, by the help of a tall muscular Arab grasping each hand, and another pushing from behind, and occasionally giving his knee to rest on, when the stone was too high for stepping distance, we managed to reach the top of Cheops; and oh! what a view was on every side! There lay the whole land of Egypt, watered by the river; the distant Pyramids of Saccara, and, almost at our feet, the spot where was fought the battle of the Pyramids; to the east, the numerous

minarets and buildings of Grand Cairo ; and stretching far away to the west, in dreary vastness, the great Lybian Desert. The enjoyment of the scene was much diminished by the importunity of the Arabs for "baksheesh," and their great anxiety and hurry to get us down again, as they espied fresh victims, *i.e.*, travellers, approaching over the plain.

The descent was safely accomplished, and we next explored the interior, by the dim light of a few wax-candles, going down a passage on an inclined plane of an angle of about 30° , and then up a similar one with single projecting stones, and sometimes a continuous ledge on either side. We required as much support from our attendant Arabs to help us over the rough, broken, slippery places as we had in climbing the exterior ; on the smooth inclined plane, it was almost impossible to keep one's footing. After a good deal of slipping and scrambling, and swallowing a quantity of dust, we reached the so-called King's Chamber, and saw the empty sarcophagus, formed of a gigantic stone ; the sides and roofs of the chamber are of huge polished blocks of granite. We did not visit any of the other rooms, which are over this one, and are said to be similar to it, only smaller.

On our return, on the left side of the passage, a very deep well is pointed out, said to communicate with the Nile. Our dragoman had made us a comfortable divan, by the aid of our saddles and carpets, in a cool

shady recess at the foot of the Pyramid itself; and here we rested, enjoying the northerly breeze, after our hot and fatiguing morning's work, and partook of some slight refreshment which we had brought with us. We had great amusement bargaining with our Arab guides, squatted in front, who were eagerly displaying their antiquities for sale,—Roman coins and small pottery images found in the tombs, the greater part of them said to be manufactured on purpose for travellers.

On our return we cast a glance at the Great Sphinx, hewn out of the living rock, impressive from its enormous size, but greatly disfigured, and every year more and more buried in the sand. The wind continuing very high, we had rather a rough passage crossing the river to Old Cairo, and reached our hotel between five and six in the evening, tired but highly delighted with our day's excursion.

During our stay in Cairo we did not omit to visit the Church Mission schools, which are not flourishing. The boys' school was closed about five years ago by the society for want of funds; but Mrs Leider has managed to keep up the girls' school, under every disadvantage, by means of voluntary contributions. When we visited it, we found about thirty girls present, who are taught to read the Bible, useful knowledge, washing, and sewing. The instruction given by the master being wholly in Arabic, we were unable to judge of

the proficiency of the pupils, as we did not understand the language. On our entrance, the monitors drew their white veils over their faces, only shewing their dark lustrous eyes. The figures of the elder girls were very graceful, and their dress remarkably becoming. Mrs Leider pointed out amongst them representatives of most of the various tribes and sects who inhabit Cairo. No distinction is made; all are welcome.

Within the last twelvemonths, the American Baptists have established a mission at Cairo, where we attended Divine service one Sunday afternoon. The congregation was very small, the service conducted in the Presbyterian fashion, and the singing beautiful. The minister told us they had a school of twenty children in a room below, and spoke confidently of their sphere of usefulness being extended when they became better known.

CHAPTER II.

THE LITTLE DESERT—EL ARISH.

April 9.—The day appointed for our exodus.—As early as the Arabs could be prevailed upon to bring the camels to our hotel, the servants commenced loading. We had three tents—one for the two ladies, one for the gentleman, in which all boxes and luggage not required for daily use were put away at night, and in the third all the stores were kept; our servants slept there, and we breakfasted in it while our own tents were being struck and packed.

The cooking was performed in the open air, in a small iron grate used for this purpose by European travellers when marching. The fuel is charcoal, carried in sacks; and it tests the skill of your cook to provide a good dinner in the Desert without being wasteful of this precious article. The bread at Cairo not being good, we took a large supply of excellent biscuits from Mrs Walker, besides tea, coffee, sugar, rice, sago, tapioca, arrowroot, jams, honey, and sardines. Milk being very rarely procurable, and then

often of questionable quality, we found that chocolate or cocoa made the best breakfast, though our courier sometimes treated us to *café-au-lait*.

To be dependent on the villages for kids or fowls, is to insure tough, stringy, lean meat, so a good supply of chickens was taken from Cairo, and carried in a coop tied on the top of one of the camel-loads; this provided us with tender, well-fed poultry the whole way to Jerusalem, besides fresh-laid eggs every morning from the "farm-yard," as our courier jocosely expressed himself.

Our daily routine was to rise with the sun, and, during the latter part of the journey, even before, on account of the increasing heat; and, as soon as we were seated at breakfast, the servants began packing and loading—tents, luggage, and water-barrels, of which we had two for our own use, under lock and key—the one for cooking, the other for drinking.

Our breakfast over, the remainder of which our servants shared, that tent and the canteens were loaded, and when all the baggage-camels were ready, the dromedaries, ridden by the two ladies, were made as comfortable as possible with heaps of mattresses and counterpanes, and over all a small carpet. At first we were told that no horse could cross the Desert without a large supply of water for its extra use; however, the morning of our departure, one of the sheikhs, wishing to take a black mare to Jerusalem, offered her

to the gentleman of our party to ride, instead of a dromedary which had been agreed upon in the written contract; wonderful to relate, not a drop of water was carried for the beast, which was sometimes twelve hours without drinking, and entirely dependent, during our seven days' march through the Desert itself, upon the brackish wells, and still was in excellent condition at her journey's end.

After travelling for four or five hours, we halted for luncheon, which consisted of oranges, figs, dates, biscuits, and water, and at three o'clock, never later than four, we stopped for the day; sometimes, indeed, we did not travel beyond two P.M., so as to make the journey as little fatiguing as possible. It was generally three hours after arriving at our ground that dinner was served, consisting of an excellent soup, two other dishes, and vegetables; and at eight o'clock, or soon after, we were glad to retire to our small iron folding-bedsteads, light mattress, and cotton quilted counterpane, used instead of blankets. Folding camp-chairs, with backs, we found very comfortable, and a few small gimlets to screw into the tent-pole, are very useful, as they act as pegs.

To carry all this camp-equipage and baggage, it required nine camels; and, on the march, the nose of one was tied to the tail of the one preceding it, and the foremost was led by one of the camel-drivers, whose pace regulated the progress of the whole caravan.

One lady wore a bonnet and shade, and the other a brown straw hat, but we could never give a decided preference to either head-dress—experience proving that there were disadvantages attending both.* Over the bonnet, and under the hat, an Arab kufeea was loosely tied, the corners hanging well down behind, and the part round the face projecting, so as to be a protection against the sun. The hat had several folds of white muslin round the crown, and a thick brown veil each completed the costume. Green is to be avoided, as it is the sacred colour of the Mussulmans.

Ourselves and our retainers made up a goodly party, consisting of two sheikhs (Bara and Mohammed), two camel-drivers, and three sons belonging to the Cairo sheikh. The youngest, Ibrahim, walked wonderfully well for a child of nine or ten years old, and was the owner of the small dromedary ridden by our courier,—a wretched, untrained beast! Then there was a black slave woman, belonging to sheikh Mohammed, the cook, the dragoman, our courier, and ourselves.

All travellers, especially in eastern countries, know, and have often experienced the disadvantages attending much luggage; ours was therefore restricted to the smallest quantity, a good supply of linen being all that is essential; and we found that a carpet-bag each, and

* The gentleman of our party thinks that a white beaver hat, with low crown and broad brim, would be without objection.

two portmanteaus, carried all that was required for three people.

We started from Shephard's hotel at three o'clock in the afternoon, and in rather more than two hours reached Heliopolis, six miles off. The wind was high and the sun hot as we emerged from the Bab-el-Hadji (gate of the pilgrims), and though we never entirely lost sight of vegetation, the way across the Desert was sufficiently monotonous to make us think the journey shorter than it really was. The camels are all kneeling in front of our tents, and the poor fowls have been let out of their cage, and are running about seeming quite happy. The purple tints of the hills, and glory of the setting sun, with the palm-trees pencilled on the glowing sky, are perfectly lovely.

The baggage-camels having preceded us, we found everything ready on our arrival, and dined comfortably, and without delay; indeed, the fare was infinitely superior to anything we had had at Cairo, and continued to be so during the whole of our sojourn in tents. It was interesting to watch the Arabs light their fire, and gather round it for their evening meal.

Their countenances, and the forms of the camels, were quite distinct in the ruddy light, and had a beautiful effect amidst the surrounding darkness. The wind was rather unpleasant, and we felt a little strange at first in these new scenes, but slept well in spite of

the talking, singing, and nightly rounds of our faithful Bedouins.

April 10.—Awaking at daybreak, we saw one of our Arabs performing his ablutions in the sand, kissing the ground, and repeating his prayers with his face towards Mecca. After breakfast, we visited the Virgin's tree, an old sycamore, of certainly venerable antiquity, where she is said to have rested in her flight into Egypt. It is situated in a lovely garden at Helio-polis, in which the air was balmy and scented, and the pomegranates in full flower. We then proceeded to another garden, to see the obelisk inscribed with the name of Joseph's patron,—a most beautiful relic of the celebrated city "On," the hieroglyphics still fresh, though the wild bees' cells make them appear in relief on one side. Having finally started at eight o'clock, we reached El Kanka at noon, and rested half-an-hour by the road side. It is a curious Roman town, with quaint doorways, and a ruined mosque. The next three hours were painfully hot under the noonday sun and a very high wind. On our right lay the real hard sandy Desert; on our left, cultivated country, part of the land of Goshen.

We were very thankful to reach the end of our day's march at Zoamel, and to rest near some fine deep wells. We walked across from our encampment to the buzzing water-wheel, and really luxuriated in the

look and feel of the delicious running water in a thick palm-grove. The owner of the oxen gave us a basket, which he ingeniously manufactured in a few minutes from the gigantic pod which incloses the future date; the bunch of the latter, stripped of this rough husk, looked exactly like a miniature palm in white grains, with the infant leaves like a most delicate feather.—To Zoamel, 18 miles in 7 hours.

April 11.—The first news this morning was that a camel had died overnight from eating too much green forage, and that the Arabs were breakfasting on its liver, &c., having sold the carcass for two pounds to the villagers. Zoamel is pleasantly situated; waving palms and green trees within its enclosures, and doves above the houses. Still skirting the Desert, we saw the black tents of the Bedouins, and several picturesque sheikhs riding about; the bones of camels lay whitening on the sand, and the delusive mirage was very conspicuous. Having left one of our head sheikhs (Bara) behind to purchase another camel, our journey was only half-a-day, and we pitched at Belbies, near an encampment of Egyptian officers who were engaged surveying the line for the Suez canal.

The tents being in the open plain, we were obliged, during the heat of the day, to take refuge under a sycamore-tree, overhanging a pool of muddy water. Alas! how different from the delicious sparkling ele-

ment of yesterday, though the women came to fill their pitchers, and bathe themselves and their children incessantly. The reflection of the men and encampment on the opposite shore was beautifully distinct as we returned to dinner; but still the heat was very great, until the wind rose late in the evening, which caused the tents to shake unpleasantly. The Arabs performed a wild dance—a fantasia—clapping their hands and singing.—10 miles; 4 hours.

April 12.—We were ready to start, as usual, before eight o'clock; but our sheikh and four Arabs were off to the bazaar, under pretence of laying in stores; and, though two messages were sent to them, they did not vouchsafe to reappear until half-past ten. One of the Turkish officers who had observed us sitting patiently on our packages for the last two hours, very good-naturedly came to inquire the cause of our evident delay in starting, and on being made acquainted with it, laid hands on some of our men, and walked them off to the head sheikh of the town. This summary proceeding hastened the return of the others, and we started off with considerable speed, though Sheikh Bara looked as black as thunder for some time afterwards.

We passed through a lovely country of gardens, orchards, palm-trees, wells; the "Goshen" of the

Bible. The camels were very tiresome, as they greatly disliked the narrow bridges across the numerous water-courses, and insisted on stooping their long necks to crop off every green thing on either side.

We encamped, after five hours' march (eleven miles), not at all tired, as the wind was cool and refreshing throughout the day. The sheikh of the little village came with a guard of men for our protection (?) and they were all treated with coffee and tobacco. In return for this, they made a great noise, challenging the passers-by all night "Abu Hameed."

April 13.—Rather cold when we rose at five o'clock—the sun was enshrouded in mist on his first appearance—the pomegranates in flower close to our encampment.

Crossing a sandy desert in a high wind, we met some hadjis from Jerusalem, tattered-looking derweeshes, and arrived at "El Gorain," whose palm-groves we had descried long before. It seemed to have been formerly a considerable place, there being two ruined mosques, and a number of forsaken mud walls; but the rich and luxuriant vegetation was beautiful, and the green of the lime-trees peculiarly refreshing; then more desert, occasionally a patch of wheat intervening, and the camel tracks the only roads—plenty of sparkling stones to interest a mineralogist. We stopped, as usual, half-an-hour for

luncheon, beside a well and some palm-trees. A tall, fine looking woman was attending to the ox which turned the wheel, and talked gaily to us, calling us "hadjis," as our Bedouins do, shewing her ornaments. We encamped at half-past three o'clock near the village of Abuser-hane, where the palm and pomegranates gave real shade, but we were neither hot nor thirsty, the day having been cool, with a refreshing breeze and a few drops of rain. On the road to-day the Bedouins made one of their party, an old man, perform the sword dance, clapping their hands to mark the time.—7 hours; 18 miles.

April 14.—A half-day's march to Salaheeah, where we lay in our last supplies for the Desert, on which we enter to-morrow. We encamped in a palm-grove, and the women brought us presents of tomatas, and saluted us in the Coptic fashion; and, during our luncheon by a well, a crowd of women and girls squatted round us. Our road from Abuser-hane was rather uninteresting, scrubby bushes and the heath of the Desert covering most part of the waste. Salaheeah is remarkable for its fine dates, large quantities of which are exported to France and England, and we did not fail to lay in a supply for the "Wilderness." A lovely warm bright night, the stars shining with peculiar brilliancy, and the palm-trees appearing

covered with spangles, by the light of a young moon.
—3½ hours.

April 15.—Encamped in the Desert, near a small salt-water lake; the Desert nightingale gave us a few pretty notes, and we saw sand-coloured lizards, and the wild bee, and also some pretty pink stork flowers. Our Bedouins were playing on a bamboo flute, and singing very merrily. We passed a large salt-water lake, quite a refreshing object; the small salt marshes were all dried up. This proved a fatiguing day, owing to the heat and sameness, our route having lain through loose sand and low prickly bushes.—7½ hours; 20 miles.

April 16.—Left our quarters near the Salt Lake at half-past seven o'clock, and reached Deodar at two. The march to-day was over hard clay and bushes; but we did not suffer from the heat, owing to a fresh northerly breeze from the Mediterranean. We passed the ancient bridges of "El Kantra," where the waters of "Sihor" once flowed; but now nothing but dry salt remains. Further on, we came to a few palms and tamarisks, and then some Roman walls, apparently of a castle and barrack. The clouds beyond the Salt Lake looked exactly like mountains in the early morning. Owing to the number of thick bushes, this wilderness does not seem very desolate; and to-day

the inequalities of the ground prevented our seeing to any great distance. The place where we encamped contained many palm-trees in a hollow, and water, reminding one of "Elijah!" but the water had a putrid smell.—6 hours; 18 miles.

April 17.—Left at half-past seven, and journeyed through the Desert, composed of low hills of shifting sand, covered with stunted bushes, to Guttaia; and we also passed a salt well on our route. Our Arabs ate a kind of bitter herb, which they picked up as they went along. Early this morning the clouds looked almost like snowy plains. At one time we had an extensive view, and the distant sandhills had a beautiful purple shade over them. Passed an Arab encampment; their low black tents, many of them covered with the small branches of shrubs, looked scarcely fit for human beings. There were some fine tall women amongst them, and numbers of sandy-coloured barking dogs. Here we saw mounds of Roman ruins; and the brackish well near us had a great deal of Roman masonry about it.—6 hours; 15 miles.

April 18.—We experienced a plague of mosquitoes last night at Guttaia. They rose in myriads from the ground. Early this morning a wet fog, which did not clear off until the sun was well up. The country we passed bore the same aspect as yesterday—shifting

sand and low bushes. We had a few peeps of the sea, and passed more black tents, with the ruins of "Nebaroth." The wild camomile was very plentiful, and a curious species of asparagus and vetch, which the Arabs called Taeab (good), and greedily devoured. Our Bedouins are really very "aggravating." This morning, just before starting, the chickens were all let out by somebody; and we had actually to unpack and repitch a tent before the feathered tribe could be caught and safely housed in their hutch. Yesterday we added a derweesh to our caravan, and a strange figure he is, in a patched and wadded garment, with a water-jar, wallet, and long stick. We encamped in the Desert, two hours beyond "Bir-el-Abid" (the well of the slave).—8 hours; 20 miles.

April 19.—The Desert the same character as yesterday, but enlivened by a profusion of wild flowers, white, red, and yellow—the wild camomile, the poppy, and the dandelion. We saw the hills of El Khalil (Seir) to-day, and passed over the dry beds of lakes, inclosed by steep banks, and in parts narrow and slippery. There were many black tents scattered about, with herds of camels feeding near them. Just as we reached our encamping ground, Abougilbany, our Bedouins raised a shout of delight, and down came a crowd of gaily-dressed, wild-looking men, riding fast and furiously on beautiful dromedaries,

and scouring about in all directions. They proved to be a detachment of Said Pasha's Dromedary Corps, raised for keeping order in these parts, and on their way to El-Arish. After resting, and letting their pretty animals stray about, while one man, in a red robe and kufna, helped our men to put up the tents, they departed in the evening.

This wilderness is truly the land of the Bedouin. They seem to luxuriate in their wild freedom, and are most excitable. Their shouting and singing, dancing and clapping hands, were perfectly deafening, so that we could scarcely hear each other speak in the tents. —8 hours ; 21 miles.

April 20.—This morning, at a quarter past seven o'clock, when we left our camp, the sun was already hot, and, walled in by sandhills and occasional low bushes, we suffered much from his scorching rays during the march. In the early morn the birds sang delightfully. We met several armed Arabs, dark, fine-looking men, who came to ask for water. The Bedouins are perpetually drinking, in consequence of eating dry bread and smoking so much. They search every hole in the sand, and seem to relish the hot brackish mixture. Our "derweesh" was sadly disappointed this morning, on visiting the tomb of a sheikh, to find that a brother pilgrim had already secured the money deposited there by some charitable

person as a votive offering for the benefit of the poor pilgrims ; a usual practice in these countries, and the stations are well known to the wandering derweeshes. We encamped in the Desert, not far from a lake communicating with the sea.—6½ hours ; 15 miles.

April 21.—Being only four hours' ride from "El-Arish," we started at seven o'clock, in advance of the caravan, so as to avoid the heat of the day. It was delightful to hear the birds singing and the waves roaring. A charming sea-breeze made the journey extremely pleasant. We passed the palm-trees where M'Cheyne found the wells that were "Marah," and thought of his present bliss. "He shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on him, nor any heat." We were "coming up out of Egypt," all the way toiling over moving sand-hills, where, for the last hour, vegetation entirely disappeared. Our first peep of the low mud walls and small stone fort of El-Arish was like seeing land after a sea voyage, though it looked desolate enough. We asked hospitality of the Turkish governor until the caravan should arrive with our tents. He was a well-dressed, handsome, grave-looking, dark man, and with great kindness he immediately granted our request, and intimated that he would himself conduct the ladies to the Hareem, and pointed out a nice cool lower office for the gentleman to repose in. We followed our

guide through narrow passages, up an old staircase, through tiny courts and doorways, until we reached his sanctum, a room sloping upwards to the divan, covered with a Turkey carpet. The furniture and cushions looked old and faded, the walls mud-whitened over, and we were motioned to sit, or rather squat down, which we did in very tolerable style, and the governor sat opposite to us. Neither party could speak an intelligible word to each other, but a slave came to remove our travelling garments, and it appeared that the chief lady of the Hareem was at her toilet. She entered by and by, saluting us in Oriental fashion, by touching her forehead and lips. She was fair and very fat, a handsome shawl meeting only once round her waist; diamond ear-rings and a necklace of pearls; a very pretty cap on her head, and her hair braided below it. The governor departed and sent us an interpreter, the son of a Maltese who acts in that capacity for him, but the boy spoke Italian very badly, and could not translate much of what the lady said. She told us she had buried ten of her children, the eleventh was alive, whom we saw, a grown-up man. Then came in a woman of somewhat inferior caste, wearing the blue mantle of the peasants, pale, and sad-looking, with a baby of two months old in her arms, which she was nursing. She gave it to us unsolicited to look at, and it was wonderfully clean for an Egyptian child. A very smart lady came in

next, in a green cashmere jacket, pink calico trousers and train, diamond ear-rings, and long brown pigtailed. The chief lady introduced us to her as "hadjis," and when our conversation was quite exhausted, we partook of excellent coffee, in pretty china cups with silver stands, handed to us by the slaves, a merry looking, nicely dressed set of girls. The sherbet was in large glasses; and when we had finished a napkin was handed to us to wipe our mouths; the chibouk was smoked by the chief lady, who asked if English people liked it, and on being told that the ladies never smoked, she did not press us further. The governor came again to the door and asked after our wellbeing, and advised us to go to sleep, which we agreed to do. The ladies most kindly fetched more cushions and another mattress, and spread a nice clean sheet upon it; then shutting the windows and door, they left us alone for a couple of hours, and we were glad of the repose. When the ladies returned, we were introduced to a much older woman, with a child of five or six years old. The chief lady arranged her tresses before a small looking-glass, and then commenced preparations for dinner. The slaves brought in a large brass basin, with a raised place for soap in the middle, and poured water over our hands—a most delicious sensation—and we were each provided with a large napkin. The ladies then tucked up their sleeves for action; and when all were seated in a circle, a stool was placed in the midst, with a cloth thrown

over it, and a tray put upon it, containing the first dish, forcemeat balls, besides a sort of salad, chiefly of onions, and some enormous radishes garnishing the tray. *We* had each a plate, and knife and fork, but the rest used their fingers, and had unleavened Arab cakes. There was a dish of bitter herbs or sorrel, into which they "dipped a sop;" rice balls, with spices wrapped up in vine leaves; meat with sauce and onions, with a desperate taste; sweet balls, made of butter and powdered with sugar; a kind of sweet brown pancake; and last of all, a mound of greasy rice, and some thick sour milk, which we could scarcely bear to taste. We were very glad when it was all over; and the washing of hands again took place; then more coffee and chibouks.

They were delighted with our eau-de-Cologne, and *the* lady emptied a good deal of it into an old bottle. She was greatly amused at our pockets, keys, and brooches, though she could talk of the beauties of Cairo, and the horrors of camel-riding. She shewed us some "pale ale," which had been made a present to the Bey, and made wry faces thereat. They were all very anxious to keep us that night, or make us promise to go and see them next morning; but when we declared both to be impossible, they wished us, one and all, the pretty salaam, Peace be unto you, and held our hands and saluted us warmly; altogether, we were charmed with their delicacy of feeling and

ample hospitality. As wayworn pilgrims, we could feel that the Saviour's expression was full of force, "I was a stranger and ye took me in." We sent them a present of needles, and the lady asked for cotton, but we had none. A marriage procession close to our tents made a deafening noise half the night.

April 22.—A delay of half-an-hour, whilst the people were trying to cheat us about changing camels, and we left several of our men behind. The derweesh and slave-owner rejoined us: they had made a forced march to El-Arish for water. The slave-girl Norsah was left with Sheikh Mohammed's wife: she was a happy, well-behaved creature, and was delighted at receiving a needle and some cotton to make her robe. She was grieved at leaving Cairo, so Hadji Salim told us, and we wished she had been transferred to our kind entertainers. Our Arabs had all made themselves very smart; Sheikh Osman came out in a bright scarlet robe, and clean turban, and Mohammed had put on his white dress for El-Arish; but they were so grand that they gave us a great deal of trouble.

We passed the dry torrent of "the river of Egypt," and saw a few signs of cultivation; but this portion of Simeon closely resembles the Desert—loose sand and bushes, with the poorest grass, and small patches of barley. On entering Syria we were made to pay tribute, namely, a tax of a few piastres on the head of

each Christian, levied by the frontier villages, and demanded by armed men.—6 hours ; 18 miles.

April 23.—Started at seven o'clock. A warm sirocco wind blowing, and little sun, but very hot and oppressive, until the sea-breeze set in about eleven o'clock. We stopped at the well of Sheikh Jueed, and drank its sweet but muddy waters. Though the scenery was nearly as sandy and monotonous as the Desert, still it was interesting to think we were in the "lot of Simeon," the "sea-coast of the Philistines," desolate now, according to the word of prophecy. Arab encampments, with their flocks, are the only inhabitants,—beautiful clover springing up wild amongst the scattered bushes. We saw the ruins of the Roman Raphia, one prostrate, two upright, gray granite columns alone remaining. The birds were singing sweetly, and the larks most abundant in this land. Encamped one hour short of Khan Younus. We were obliged to pay another black-mail, levied on the "Noozrani" to-day.—7 hours ; 20 miles.

April 24.—We feel the climate already so different from that of Egypt and the Desert ; the air soft, moist, and balmy, laden with the perfume of wild flowers, broom, &c. We started at seven o'clock, and after ascending the first sandy eminence, were pounced upon by a "garde de santé," from Khan Younus,

accompanied by a man wearing a "writer's inkhorn," who took down our names and number, &c. The wary derweesh, after taking a friendly farewell of our courier, had departed early in the morning, so as to avoid the quarantine at Gaza, and, no doubt, entered the country through some obscure village where no notice was taken of him. This poor pilgrim to Bagdad will long be remembered by us. He never took part in any of the quarrels or jokes of our Bedouins; looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, he seemed to have but one object in view, which absorbed his thoughts and energies; and yet he would freely lend his precious water-jar to allay the thirst of his fellow-travellers, and often refused the good things offered to him by them,—“forgetting the things that were behind, and reaching forth to those things that were before.” It seemed so sad that no one could point out to him “the way, the truth, and the life.” After a wearisome ascent, we reached the summit of a hill overlooking Khan Younus, and could scarcely help giving a shout of joy, as we obtained the long-desired Pisgah-like view of the land of promise. The fields stood dressed in living green; the birds were singing sweetly; the Sultan’s khan and mosque were conspicuously beautiful in the midst of the town; and the cactus hedges and sycamore trees refreshed our weary eyes. As we descended, every step seemed to reveal new stores of delight. It was the time of bar-

ley-harvest ; and the yellow flowers and fresh shoots of the prickly pear enclosed a multitude of gardens. The town seemed full and busy. Here the desert really and abruptly ends. It is a gradual rise of 150 miles from Salaheeah to Khan Younus. After leaving the town, we traversed wide undulating plains, where grazed the camels of an Arab encampment. Large lizards were climbing round the aged sycamores ; and the ground was covered with wild-flowers ; the pink bindweed, dark-blue shepherd's weather-glass, purple iris, and anemonies of divers shades of scarlet. An armed soldier, leading his horse, had taken us in charge, and he loudly warned everybody on the road to beware of us and the quarantine ; and it was absurd to see them driving away sheep and cattle on our approach, as if we really had the plague. We could not help laughing, hoping that the Sultau had abolished this vexation in favour of his good allies ; but no such thing. While we were still looking with interest at the conical hill, which is reported to be the one "over against Hebron" where Samson carried the gates of Gaza, we were brought to a sudden stand-still before the quarantine station at the entrance of the town. A caravan of merchants and six tattered derweeshes, who had just preceded us, were marched into the precincts of the hateful edifice, an ugly modern building raised, at a great expense, eight years ago, and in a wretched state of discomfort ; but we resolved to make

a fight for it, and waited until the Hakeem made his appearance, a smart-looking German doctor, who protested that he was in danger of losing his head if he suffered us to depart, and that he must either put us or the whole town of Gaza into quarantine.

As our Bedouins and all the camels were to perform quarantine at the distance of half a mile, amongst the sandhills, we thought it safest to have our tents pitched inside the court-yard, near to a good well of water. The evening set in rainy; so we retired within our walls, rejoicing in the prospect of clean clothes, baths, and such like luxuries. A few heavy showers fell during the night; but no damage was done. The *gardes de santé*, who live within the enclosure, we found to be a very noisy set, singing, clapping hands, and vociferously talking nearly all night.

April 25.—The doctor came to pay us a visit this morning, but does not dare touch us, nor enter our tents. He has some fine-looking children running wild, and has brought us the few books he possesses, viz., Lamartine's "Orient," a copy of "Schiller," and an English Annual; but we are fortunately not dependent on his library. From the upper unglazed windows of the Lazaretto, we have a fine view of modern Gaza,—a mud-built town, with but few stone houses. The doctor was with Selim Pacha at Batoum, and followed him in the campaign against the Rus-

sians. In the evening we had a visit from the Turkish director, and were obliged to have two interpreters.

April 26.—Under the escort of the doctor and a guardian, this afternoon we had a pleasant ride, partly across the fields to Samson's hill, a mile off, where the tomb of Sheikh Mansoor is erected. What a glorious view burst upon us! A beautifully cultivated plain, and the gentle blue outline of the mountains of Hebron on the one side; and on the other, the modern town of Gaza, with its minarets, domes, seraglio, surrounded by olive groves, and gardens of orange and pomegranate trees, and the great sea bounding the horizon. The ancient town must have been of immense extent, from wide-spread limits which we could distinctly trace. We thoroughly enjoyed our ride; the hedges of cactus were so gigantic as to afford a delightful shade, and the afternoon breeze was delicious; altogether we felt like birds escaped from a cage, and returned with very different feelings to the walls of our prison.

April 27.—We were released from quarantine this morning, and made two short marches hence to Ramlah. Leaving the Lazaretto about half-past seven o'clock, we were escorted through the town by the doctor. It is built on the side of a steep hill, and has a ruinous appearance. We fancied we could trace

the Norman keep of Cœur de Lion's habitation, and the Cathedral of Helena, now a mosque. On leaving Gaza, our road for the first three miles lay through a magnificent grove of olives, and, emerging from it, we had some lovely peeps of the gently swelling hills of Philistia. The day was windy and sunny, the beauty of the crops quite surprised us, as well as their extent, and the number of people employed in ploughing. We had some difficulty in finding a vacant spot for our tents, but at last pitched in a fine olive grove near the village of Mashdal.

April 28.—This morning was bright and lovely, and our day's march took us within a short distance of Ramlah. The fields of wheat were really magnificent to-day. Near Ashdod (Azotus) we saw a breadth of corn which we estimated could not be less than ten square miles. The earth, freshly turned up by the plough, looked quite moist from the former rain; and camels, oxen, and asses, were all busily engaged in preparing the land for millet. Our Arabs eat lentils, a small pea with vetch-like leaves, which they plucked as they passed along. We saw the site of Ashdod, and the hill whereon Dagon's temple stood; at Ebnah, a village further on, we stopped to lunch in a garden, enjoying the delightful shade of a fig-tree. Having preceded the caravan, we did not lose any time by our halt, and were not disposed to feel weary

as we surveyed the richly cultivated plains, bounded by the long blue ethereal line of the hill country of Judea, which appeared but faintly yesterday.—Gaza to Ramlah, 13 hours ; 38 miles.

April 29.—A lovely fresh morning ; the air scented with aromatic odours, and the eye regaled with a blaze of brilliant wild flowers. The wheat fields in the plain of Philistia were most luxuriant, and our approach to Ramlah truly striking. The richness of the verdure, and the beauty of the gardens, together with the picturesque appearance of the town, surpassed anything we had yet seen. The tower of one of the handsome churches of the Crusaders was very conspicuous, and a refreshing object in a Mohammedan country. After purchasing some oranges in the bazaar at Ramlah, we proceeded on foot to the Campo Santo in a broiling sunshine, and, passing an immense water-tank, took refuge under a spreading tamarisk. After about half an hour's delay, we remounted, leaving the caravan behind, and proceeded across a fruitful plain towards the hill country of Judea, until we reached a large village of thieving notoriety, on the outskirts of which we were assailed by a multitude of children carrying water-jars, and roaring, "Moye, Hadji, Baksheesh." Spreading our carpets under an olive-tree, we drank some of the cool water, and rested until the arrival of the caravan.

Leaving this village, we descended by a stony path into a small plain, which looked very sterile after Philistia. We now met crowds of pilgrims of various nations, all returning from Jerusalem after the Easter ceremonies, mounted on camels, horses, and mules; and numbers of women and children, all looking as if they had come from a pic-nic,—laughing, talking, and saluting us. The men were, in general, perfect Falstaffs; the women rode astride, or were doubled up in panniers. Some of the men rode good horses, and carried long guns and pistols. Most of them had long tin rouleaux strapped round them, containing relics and pictures; and many had the water of the Jordan in tin cases. The women had wonderfully large feet and legs, and some wore boots like men. Their complexions were, in general, beautifully fair, but their features rather coarse. We were addressed *en passant* in English, French, and Italian, besides receiving some Eastern salutations.

We now began to approach the rugged mountains of Judah; and owing to the road being covered with loose stones, we found the ascent on our camels very disagreeable. We at length encamped, after an eight hours' march, at Deir Ayubd, in a small green spot close by a well, about twenty miles from Jerusalem. The night was very much disturbed by the noise of the passers-by, the call of Aramee (robbers) now and then, and the patrolling of the Bedouins.

April 30.—We rose very early, and started at six o'clock so as to avoid travelling in the heat of the day as much as possible, and get to Jerusalem early. The morning was piercingly cold, and even the birds and flowers were scarcely awake, but the genial beams of the sun soon warmed our freezing limbs. We first entered a most striking mountain defile, the towering rocks thickly clothed with shrubs, and occasionally we saw the fig and the olive; and passed the dens of the mountain guards, who profess to protect travellers for a consideration, and have apparently been established by Government. After ascending for about two hours, on looking back, a magnificent view broke upon us, between an opening in the hills, of the lovely plains, the long line of yellow sand-hills along the sea-coast to Jaffa, and the mosque of Ramlah more distinctly. The tints of morning were of the softest azure, green, white, and yellow mingling with the deeper blue of the great sea. "'Twas passing fair." The wild flowers and shrubs were sweet and brilliant, and the shadows of the rocky heights deep and dark. We observed the remarkable terracing of these Judæan mountains, eminently fitted for vines. An old fort crowned one of the heights. The descent was so steep and stony to "Aboo Gosh," that we deemed it prudent to walk down. Here we saw a ruined church of the Crusaders, and were delighted with the appearance of the stone-built village *clinging to the rocks*, supposed to be "Kirjath-Jearim."

We saw also the valley of Elah, and a trickling brook, where David probably chose his smooth stones.

After resting under the shade of some olive-trees near a roadside well, notwithstanding the heat of the sun we walked over rough loose stones to the village of Kaloonee—the weariness and heat being forgotten in the joyful anticipation of seeing the Holy City.

Leaving the vines and figs which grew in the vale, and bidding adieu to a stream of pilgrims, we commenced a steep uninterrupted stony ascent of two hours. Every step led to a scene of greater desolation. It seemed profanation to break the silence. One could not have borne a word from one's dearest friend, during those thrilling moments when every turn was likely to reveal the towers and bulwarks of Jerusalem. Truly one's heart did burn within one, at the thoughts of all which our blessed Saviour did and suffered at that place. The first glimpse we caught of the towers of a mosque on the Mount of Olives was disappointing; but when the city itself appeared in view, with her walls and gates, domes and towers, backed by the mountains of Moab, wearing such a celestial hue, we were fully satisfied, and felt that it was "beautiful for situation." We entered by the Damascus gate, and, threading our way amid the silent narrow streets, joyfully rested within the cool, thick walls of Antonio's Hotel, with grateful hearts at having reached Jerusalem in safety.

CHAPTER III.

JERUSALEM—BETHLEHEM—JORDAN—DEAD SEA—
JAFFA.

THE day after our arrival at Jerusalem, we were fortunate enough to be able to visit the Mosque of Omar, which was opened for the inspection of all Christians for the last time this year, on payment of £1 each as an entrance-fee. Crowds of visitors from all the hotels had assembled at the entrance of the mosque, attended by the English consul.

“The Seat of David” was pointed out in front of the mosque, under a dome supported by pillars. The mosque itself was beautifully ornamented on the exterior, and within darkness seemed to reign.

In the centre, under the dome, is the huge mass of bare irregular rock, about fifty feet in diameter, considered to be part of the original foundation of the temple, under the altar of sacrifice, and down the sloping side of which the blood of the victims ran into an underground channel.

The “Well of Souls” is pointed out, in a crypt

below the rock, for good Mohammedans ; and above, on the sacred stone, the print of the foot of Mohammed's camel, from whence he is supposed to have ascended. There was not much time allowed for examination, for the whole party were hurried along by the guide, a venerable-looking priest, who led the way, shouting, "Yalla, yalla,"—Go on, go on.

We were next shewn the smaller mosque of El Aksa, built as a Christian church by Justinian. There are some fine stained-glass windows in it. Underneath this mosque are the vaults made for bringing the ground to the proper level for the temple of Solomon. It appears that the north-west side of Mount Moriah was cut away, and the south and south-east raised on vaults, to secure the even space required for the enclosure. Such magnificent and massive stones used in this subterranean work ! so beautifully fitted and joined ! and the heavy massive pillars, ornamented with elegant carvings, though now greatly worn ! On viewing only the substructure, we could now fully understand the appropriateness of the disciples' remark, "See what goodly stones and buildings are here ;" and we thought of those blessed eyes which had rested on such as these ! In the smaller mosque is shewn the print of the foot of the prophet Jesus ; and down in another vault his stone cradle ! It seemed quite blasphemous.

The "Golden Gate," now walled up, is built of the

same description of massive stones, and the interior supported by the same kind of heavy pillars as those seen in the vaults. From the top of the gate is a fine view of the valley of Jehoshaphat, Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, and mountains of Moab. In the City Wall, on the right hand side, is shewn the stone on which Mohammed will sit to judge the world. Awful even to write it! Close to our hotel was pointed out the house of Dives, and the stone on which Lazarus sat, also the spot where our Lord was supposed to have fallen when carrying his cross. In a bye street near the Holy Sepulchre, we were shewn, in a wall, the stones, with curious openings like mouths, which members of the Greek Church kiss, and are said to be those which cried out against the Jews. One wants leisure for meditation on what is real, instead of listening to foolish tales of man's device.

After making some purchases from Isaac, the Hebrew seal-cutter, he agreed to our proposal, that he should accompany us to the Jews' wailing-place, being Friday, on the lower part of Mount Moriah, inside the city walls.

We passed two Saracenic fountains, and one of the entrances of the Mosque of Omar, by filthy pools, and along a narrow descent, meeting Jews of both sexes, going to and returning from the place; the women wearing a white veil on their heads, but their faces *uncovered*, and with red eyes and downcast looks.

We reached the place where they press their foreheads to the joinings of the gigantic stones of their once glorious Temple, and heard their low sad chanting of the psalms and lamentations from the Hebrew books they carried in their hands. Many of the people were very old, and had come to die at Jerusalem. One could not help weeping with them and for them, and praying that their eyes may be opened to "look upon Him whom they have pierced;" and that the glorious promises of the restoration of Israel may be speedily fulfilled.

Our first ride on Syrian horses was round the city walls—a highly interesting excursion. Leaving by the Jaffa gate, we rode below Mount Zion, passing the Bishop's boys' school-house, the valley of Hinnom beneath us, and the Lower Pool of Gihon, which was quite dry; above, the Hill of Evil Counsel and Acladama; in front of us, the rugged Mount of Offence, where Solomon sacrificed to strange gods. Proceeding by the fountain of Enrogel, we reached Solomon's gardens, which now produce the main supply of vegetables for Jerusalem; the artichokes we saw growing there were gigantic. The Pool of Siloam was the next object of interest on our route—a lovely spot. The water was low, beautifully clear, and a channel in the rock conducted it to the gardens beneath and close to the road is shewn the tree which marks the spot where Isaiah is said to have been sawn asunder. On the opposite side of the brook Kedron, the village

of Siloam hangs on the declivity of the Mount of Offence; its houses partly hewn out of the rocks.

On our left was the fountain of the Virgin, or of Siloam, which feeds the pool of the same name; but after descending the first flight of steps, we could see no appearance of water at the bottom of the next. However, approaching the brink, we saw the softly flowing spring so clear that every pebble was visible, and sweet and cool to the taste.

The tombs in the valley of Jehoshaphat next claimed our attention. Those of Zechariah and St James are the most conspicuous. The pillar of Absalom, at which the Jews in passing cast a stone, to shew their abhorrence of his rebellion, is close by. The valley here is very contracted and precipitous—in some parts not exceeding fifty or sixty yards in breadth. Following the dry channel of the brook Kedron, on which we had entered at the fountain of Enrogel, we had the three summits of the Mount of Olives on our right, and Mount Moriah on our left, the sides of which were covered with scanty crops of corn and a few olive trees. We then crossed a bridge over the Kedron, without entering the Garden of Gethsemane. Passing the tomb of the Virgin, we returned by a steep ascent to Stephen's Gate; and half way up the hill, the spot supposed to be the scene of his martyrdom was pointed out to us.

It was a never-to-be-forgotten ride—the deep sha-

dows protecting us from the sun, whilst we crept along the valleys under the mountains of Jerusalem—every spot trodden by the Saviour of the world, bringing to memory some Scripture incident or simile, embodying kingly grandeur, divine compassion, or unspeakable anguish. It was indeed holy ground, sanctified by the Word of God, and thrilling to one's inmost soul, the calm evening hour lending peculiar solemnity to the whole scene.

One afternoon was devoted to a walk up the Mount of Olives. Passing by the archway of the Ecce Homo, and by the Governor's house, where a number of Turkish soldiers were standing in the doorway above a flight of steps, we went out of St Stephen's Gate, over Kedron, past Gethsemane, and climbed the Mount of Olives as far as the Church of the Ascension. The thought of David going up the same hill, weeping and barefooted, was forcibly brought to our recollection, but more especially did we think of Him who "ofttimes resorted thither." The church for all creeds has been destroyed by the Turks; the little shrine still remains within a court where they shew the print of the Saviour's foot, and the mark of his staff on the limestone.

We next ascended the minaret of the mosque, and had a splendid view of Jerusalem and its natural fortifications on one side, and the mountains of Moab, and the Dead Sea of the deepest blue, on the other.

Further on, we walked to the tomb of the prophetess Huldah, from whence, looking towards Jericho, we had our first view of the Jordan, winding like a dark thread under the barren mountains. What a flood of reminiscences are connected with that river! Moses praying for leave to go over it—the chosen people walking through it dry-shod—the Saviour deigning to be baptized in it!

Retracing our steps, we often paused to consider the Holy City, endeavouring to realise its former magnificence. We saw what is called the Pool of Bethesda, outside the walls, and re-entered by the Damascus Gate.

From the top of the hill Scopus, to the north of the city, is obtained one of the most extensive and beautiful views of Jerusalem and of the surrounding country. It is supposed to have been the site of the Roman encampment, and the view from it to have given rise to David's exclamation, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion."

One of the prettiest rides in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem is to what is shewn as Philip's fountain, about four miles off; and in this case the tradition appears to rest on good ground, as there is a perennial spring there, and the spot is on the ancient Roman road from the city to Gaza. Leaving by the Jaffa Gate, you pass the Greek Convent of the Cross, where there is a seminary for young men of the upper and middle classes.

It is a handsome modern edifice, with an old church, curiously painted ; and behind the altar is shewn the spot where Adam planted the tree from which the Saviour's cross was made ! You next come to the beautiful Valley of Roses, so called from the extensive plantations which furnish Jerusalem with rosebuds. The ground is admirable garden soil. Further on the scenery grows wilder : the mountains of Betha, most picturesque in their swelling rounded forms and terraced sides.

After some rough scrambling, we reached the fountain itself, a large stream of clear water issuing from a richly carved stone building, with columns and niches in the Greek style. We returned partly by the old Roman road, the pavement of which was so rough that we were glad to ride amongst the fields of wheat and plantations of olives. The sunset was most beautiful, and the sky seemed to be showering gold and purple, deep and pale blue, salmon and pink around us. The calm moonlight accorded well with our feelings, as we returned talking of Bethany, looking down upon Hinnom, and up to Zion. The city gates are always closed at sunset, but our dragoman had been instructed to have them opened for us, so there was no difficulty, and we rode through the dark-arched streets, only a solitary coffee-house being lighted up here and there. Not a sound was heard, and we found one corner barred

up by camels, and another gate locked against us, but at last we arrived safely at home.

We visited the Holy Sepulchre early in the morning, and found matins going on in the chapel of the Virgin, outside the entrance of the church, as well as in the sepulchre itself. Besides the chanting of the monks, the organ played airs from Italian operas with appropriate flourishes, and lay brethren were cleaning a large brass candlestick under the dome whilst the service was going on. The air of dilapidation and shabbiness was very striking, and daylight can be seen through the roof of the dome, it is so out of repair. The monks' countenances, whilst they were chanting, formed our only study : one of them, with black hair, hollow cheeks, and rapt expression, was a fit subject for a painter, in his Franciscan dress. At last, the service being over, we procured a guide, and visited all the holy places,—the pillar to which the Saviour was tied for flagellation ; the stone of unction ; Helena's chapel, where she discovered the true cross ; the place up stairs where Christ was crucified ; and the rock that rent. The front and sides of the altar at Calvary, presented by the Medici, and bearing their arms, are ornamented with bronze figures in relief, the whole in the richest style of art. We then descended to the sepulchre itself, which is entered by a low door, and were shewn the stone whereon the angel sat. The *marble of the Saviour's tomb* is of a coarse description,

and the flowers which ornament it are from Gethsemane. The silver lamps belonging to the Greeks, Latins, and Armenians are always lighted. The Greek chapel was handsome; the Armenian paltry. We also saw the sword, spurs, and cross of Godfrey of Bouillon, his tomb and that of his brother; also those of Nicodemus and Joseph. The monk who shewed all these places was very ignorant, and of a sneering disposition, making jocose remarks in execrable Italian, and appearing only to value localities according to the ornament bestowed on them, and depreciating those parts of the building common to all sects.

Time would fail to tell of all the monkish inventions we listened to; and as it is an almost positive certainty that this was not the place where He lay, one felt thankful that the desecrations which are constantly going on in this building are away from the real locality.

We visited Miss Cooper's industrial school and bazaar, where we made several purchases. As we entered, the Jewesses were leaving, the hours for work being from 6 to 11 A.M. An elderly woman kissed the hand of one of our party affectionately, while the fair maidens bestowed many a smile upon us. We visited the lady who manages the institution, and were much pleased with our short interview. She told us it was open to all Jewesses, who are here employed in

sewing, knitting, spinning, and weaving, and paid according to their work, which is afterwards sold, with the addition of the cost of the material. Whilst they are at work, Miss Cooper reads to them the Bible in Judeo-Spanish, and they often converse with her, but the elder ones would not submit to be catechised; they are ignorant of Hebrew, and in general dull of comprehension, the more bigotted often imposing silence on the others. It is, however, a great point gained, to have prevailed on Jewesses to enter a Christian habitation, as a few years ago such a thing was unheard-of. We returned another day to see the women at work; they were all neatly and becomingly dressed, with curious head-gear of an arched shape. Many of the younger ones wore natural roses tastefully disposed; their fine dark eyes and gentle looks were very attractive. Most of them were Spanish, and sat round the room in Turkish fashion; the German Jewesses sat on benches or chairs, and were knitting stockings. The woman whom we saw at the loom was quite a picture. She had been rich, but was in fallen circumstances.

The German deaconesses' establishment is most interesting; it consists of four sisters, of whom we saw two in their neat uniform. Their business is to go out and nurse the sick; and they have also an hospital in their own house, and a school for fifteen boarders *of different nations*. Everything was beautifully clean,

and the sisters, as well as their little pupils, wore a cheerful aspect.

We were introduced into their pretty drawing-room, which contains a harmonium, lately made a present to them, and the balcony affords a fine view of the Holy Sepulchre. We saw two sick women and one man in the wards; the latter had been wounded in a persecuting affray at Nablous.

We next visited the diocesan girls' school, where there are about twenty scholars from different countries. The mistress is gradually persuading the Arab girls to have their heads uncovered, instead of wearing the turboosh and handkerchief, and also to leave off their charms. Their writing was beautiful, not a blot, and a good round hand. Their compositions were wonderfully good, and one of them had written some lines of poetry on a sacred subject. Their names seemed so pretty: Esther, Salome, Miriam, &c. The younger class were engaged on "Reading Disentangled." The school-room is large and airy, and frequently used for meetings.

The boys' school is a large building on Mount Zion, outside the city gates. We heard them examined in reading, spelling, mental arithmetic, history, and geography; they answered willingly and well, and sang "Jerusalem" in parts. We inspected their dormitories, tasted their soup, and were much pleased with the master, a "German brother."

During our stay at Jerusalem we did not much feel the heat, except when exposed to the direct rays of the sun, owing to the enormous thickness of the walls of the dwelling-houses ; in June and July the residents usually live in tents outside the town, on account of the malaria which prevails from the filth of the city. We visited the encamping ground of the Bishop's family, pleasantly situated, with a view of Bethlehem on one side, and Nebi Samuel on the other. The place was charmingly shaded with olives, and planted with shumack, his children's school-room was under one of the old trees.

We had provided ourselves with letters of introduction to Bishop Gobat, but were grieved to find that he had left Jerusalem for England only two days before our arrival. Mrs Gobat, however, received us most kindly, and did everything in her power to make our stay profitable and agreeable, and accompanied us in our rides in the neighbourhood ; and we spent also two very pleasant evenings at her house. On one of these occasions Mr Crawford mentioned a botanist from India who had asserted that Judea never could have been anything but a desert, while others maintained that no curse lay upon it, and that it only required inhabitants ; but he pointed to the drying up of the brooks as positive proof of its altered state, and added that this country was the scene of the two greatest warnings to Jews and Gentiles which God had ever

given of his displeasure, namely, at Jerusalem, "the abomination of desolation in the holy place;" and the overwhelming of the wicked cities in the Dead Sea. The evening closed by Mr Crawford giving an exposition of Isaiah l., and speaking beautifully of the forsaken condition of Israel, and the curse on the land which had shed innocent blood.

The new Protestant church, Christ Church, is a handsome, though plain, unpretending building, near what is called the Tower of Hippicus. We attended divine service there on Ascension Day; and deeply touching it was, after those Sundays spent in the Desert, to worship on Zion's Hill our risen and ascended Lord. Mr Crawford preached, from Hebrews vi. 19, 20, a most valuable and interesting sermon. He spoke of the terrors of the law under the Old Testament dispensation, and of the same attribute of God's character, a consuming fire, as spoken of in the New—of St Paul's simile of the anchor, and of the benefits conferred on us by the resurrection.

The following Sunday we heard Mr Nicolayson on the gifts, especially ministerial, which Christ had purchased for his church. He dwelt upon the different parts assigned to labourers, such as polishing the rough stones, or hewing out of a distant quarry, or disinterring them from mounds of rubbish, for the spiritual temple, placing them one by one on the foundation stone, until the whole be complete.

VISIT TO BETHLEHEM.

Soon after nine o'clock in the morning, we mounted our horses, and rode out of the Jaffa gate, across the valley of Rephaim, past the Convent of Mar Elias, where we were shewn, on the opposite side of the road, the mark of Elijah's body on a stone, where he is said to have rested when flying from Jezebel! We next came to Rachel's Tomb, which we could not enter, the guide having forgotten to procure the key, which is kept by the Jews. People were ploughing with oxen in the neighbourhood of Shaphat. Here we had a distant view of Bethlehem, and then proceeded, by Solomon's aqueduct, which now supplies the fountains of the Mosque of Omar, as it formerly did those of the Temple, by a precipitous descent, to the fertile vale in which were the king's gardens, now cultivated by Mr Meshullam, a converted Jew, who has built a good house, and grows corn, wine, and oil.

We rested under his fig-tree, and found there the dragoman of the English consulate negotiating for the purchase of some land with the wild Arab shiekhs. It was a most picturesque scene, a true specimen of Eastern life and manners. The dragoman was seated under the tree, on a slightly elevated platform, with a carpet spread over it, smoking his narghilee. The Arabs all squatted round him; but being Ramazan, they did not smoke. Amongst them was a young

shiekh, who had lately succeeded his father as head of the tribe, and had in consequence been invested by the Pasha with a gay red dress, which he wore on this occasion.

A servant, having on the high cap of Bethlehem, brought us leavened cakes, figs, butter, and wine, all excellent of their kind. Having partaken of this refreshment, we proceeded up the valley; and after a most toilsome and difficult ride of an hour over the mountain, we were richly repaid by the sight of the Three Pools of Solomon. The lowest is the most perfect, and the masonry quite beautiful; the whole giving one an idea of the grandeur of the wise king which was well worth acquiring. The spring which supplies these pools was visible, and clear as crystal; and near it is an Arab fort, where we saw the bees making honey in jars stuck into the wall. Returning by Meshullam's, we toiled up the steep ascent to Bethlehem under a broiling sun, and passed the well, arched over, where many women were drawing the water for which David longed, and were glad to take shelter in the Latin Convent, the low doorway of which opened to receive the weary pilgrims, the cool passages being most refreshing after the fatiguing heat we had undergone.

Helena's Church contains some handsome pillars. The Greeks and Armenians have taken possession of the edifice for their own worship. A Franciscan monk, a Venetian, did the honours of the grottoes.

We descended to that of the Nativity, and were shewn the cradle in stone, the altars marking the spot where the magi worshipped, and the burial-places of St Catherine, St Eusebius, St Jerome, and the Innocents; also the cave pointed out as St Jerome's Study, where he translated the Bible. This alone we could believe as having many claims to authenticity amidst the sickening mass of fables. The view from the top of the Greek Convent was very interesting. The monk pointed out Tekoah and Engeddi, the fields where Ruth gleaned, and where the shepherds were abiding when the angelic host appeared. But we could not linger long, for fear the gates of the Holy City should be shut against us. The evening breeze was delicious; and we looked again at the well of Nephtrah, where the magi are supposed to have seen the reflection of the star when they sat down to rest on their journey. The view of Jerusalem, as we returned, was rather striking, but very desolate, as we looked at it from below from the valley of Rephaim.

JORDAN AND THE DEAD SEA.

May 8.—Rose at four A.M., hoping to start for the Dead Sea and Jordan at six o'clock; but our shiekhs, with Eastern unpunctuality, did not arrive until a quarter to eight; and it was with some difficulty we arranged the final quarrel about money matters.

Leaving by St Stephen's gate, and along the Mount of Olives, we reached Bethany, and passed a crowd of wild Arabs with long lances, and the usual head-dress of the kufeea, and the camel-rope to keep it in its place.

After the steep descent on the other side of Bethany, the road assumes a most rugged, desolate character, winding amongst mountain glens and over stony peaks, the blue of Moab and the purple of the nearer hills presenting many beautiful peeps. The strata as we proceeded assumed every sort of grotesque shape—zigzags, curves, arches, and horizontal lines—and the stones and rocks bore the appearance of a volcanic origin; the tints varied between pink, yellow, and red. After climbing a rocky staircase, we reached a ruined khan, where we alighted for luncheon.

A tribe of Arabs having secured the shade of the great rock, we sat down where best we might. The rest of our journey reminded us of the stony mountains of Ireland. Scanty shrubs fed the Arab flocks, and we met many of the wandering Ishmaelites, some of whom saluted us politely.

Descending by a very steep road, full of loose stones, to the desolate and barren plain of Jericho, we had a good view of the Dead Sea and of the mountains of Moab, which still preserved their unbroken outline. A low range on the left, called Quarantana, on this

side Jordan, is supposed to have been the scene of our Lord's temptation.

We saw no traces of Jericho except some mounds of rubbish, over which we rode to the so-called fountain of Elisha, supposed to be the identical spring whose bitter waters he healed. The heat on the broiling plains was intense, and, though we sat near the spring under a large rock, the air felt like a furnace. We witnessed an exquisite sunset scene from a neighbouring hill. The mountains near the Dead Sea were fading into an ethereal blue, then came a division of pink, and further on there were shades of lilac mingling with pink. A shiekh rode up to us and explained the names of the hills, presenting us with cucumbers and stalks of wheat.

May 9.—Left our tents at six A.M., and started across the plains of Jericho for the Dead Sea and Jordan. The air was deliciously cool, and the morning tints most lovely. Our Arab shiekhs began to shew off on their horses, and were joined by six other Arabs, who had descended from the mountains, and they rode hither and thither, flourishing their lances in a most picturesque manner.

The plain as we approached "Bahr Lut" became more and more salt and dreary; we wound along amongst curious elevations of rock and earth, resembling the mounds of a buried city; and there was a

great depression and large fissures in some parts of the ground we traversed.

Dismounting near a rocky peninsula, we approached the clear blue Dead Sea, the waters of which we tasted, and can never forget the salt, bitter, burning draught. Walked round the peninsula on the rocks, and then set off for Jordan. The green strip along its banks marked the course of the stream, and our first view of it was beautiful. The mountains of Moab, which wear a hue of perpetual sunset, bounded the horizon; then came a low range of white hillocks; and finally, we saw the muddy river, of no great width, making a graceful bend between its steep banks, fringed with willow, tamarisk, and poplar of the loveliest hues of green. We spread our carpets under a tree before eleven o'clock, and were glad to rest quietly during the smothering heat. As true Hadjis we did not leave Jordan without bathing in it; for which purpose we had a rope tied to a stout bush on the bank, the current being excessively rapid, though the water at that spot was only four feet deep, and the bottom thick mud.*

Leaving about four o'clock, we had a very hot ride back to our encampment across the plain, with the sun in our eyes, and passed the wretched village of modern Jericho, consisting of about a dozen mud

* This is the spot where the pilgrims believe our Saviour was baptized, and where they come and bathe at Easter.

hovels, and a square stone tower, the residence of a few Turkish soldiers. Before reaching it, however, we could distinctly trace, for two miles, the remains of old gardens and their enclosures, and even marks of the small water-courses, but now all covered with thorns and brambles. Owing to the very early harvest, we had an opportunity—the only one in our travels—of seeing oxen treading out the corn, and the women winnowing.

As we approached the tents, the shade cast by the western hills was delightful, and we enjoyed the delicious evening—bright moonlight; and the frogs enlivened us with their croaking. We are much better satisfied with our Arabs here than with those that accompanied us across the Desert; they are much more civil and quiet: their spears of bamboo are brought from Bagdad, and are from fourteen to eighteen feet long, and by their aid they vault readily on their horses.

May 10.—Breakfasted at five o'clock outside the tent; the air warm and delightful. Taking a farewell draught of the sweet waters of Elisha's spring, we preceded the mules and caravan, so as to avoid as much as possible the great heat, and returned to Jerusalem by the route we had come. We rested under a tree beyond the half-way Khan, and met numerous *families of Arabs*, travelling with everything they pos-

sessed, on their way to reap the harvest across the Jordan.

The heat was intense after ten o'clock, but, nevertheless, we could not pass Bethany without visiting the tomb of Lazarus. The village is close to the roadside, built on the slope of a hill, and has some gardens, olive-trees, and verdure about it, but is not particularly picturesque. The tomb is in a cave, and is reached by a flight of steps, and there is another chamber below it.

Two views of Jerusalem burst successively on the sight after leaving Bethany, owing to the windings of the road; but it is the second which is the most striking, and which we believe to be the spot where the Saviour wept over the city.—Jerusalem to Elisha's fountain, 6 hours; Dead Sea, $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours; Jordan, $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours; Elisha's fountain, 2 hours.

May 15.—Our last day at Jerusalem. The morning was occupied in taking leave of our kind friends, who all called to see us; and before an early dinner we rode to the garden of Gethsemane, where we found a surly-looking Franciscan monk, who opened the low door in the thick wall. What were our feelings on finding the old olives surrounded by a modern garden, laid out in walks, with trellices, an arbour, and adorned with every sort of gay and flaunting flower, and tawdry coloured pictures of saints stuck into the wall at intervals!

We were even not allowed to approach the venerable trees, but were warned off, and denied even a leaf. The monk would receive no money, as the patriarch's servant was present, and was so cross he would hardly wish us *buon giorno*.

We took our final departure from Jerusalem with deep regret about four in the afternoon, Mr Graham, the lay agent of the Jews' Society, kindly accompanying us some little distance on our way, in order to shew us a view from the north of the city of the great King.

The wind was cold and blustering, but the lights and shades were lovely, and the prospect deeply interesting, embracing the whole city, the Mount of Olives over against it, the tomb of Absalom, the valley of Jehoshaphat, Siloam, and the hills of Bethlehem. We could scarcely tear ourselves away—there seemed no desolation in this view, everything soft, and green, and shining. We then proceeded to another hill, and took leave of the Jordan, the Dead Sea, and the mountains of Moab, and saw Micmash, Bethel, and Anathoth.

We passed Gibeon and Ajalon, the former a village on a hill, the latter a beautiful valley. We looked at the sun and moon with redoubled interest at this spot. Proceeding through a cultivated country, we reached some wild mountain defiles, and clambered over and *amongst* sheets of rock and sharp stones, till it be-

came almost dark, and encamped about eight o'clock at Upper Bethhoran.—4 hours.

May 16.—The morning was cold when we started, and descending very rapidly by a rugged stony road, in half-an-hour we reached Lower Bethhoran, where there were fine olive and fig trees, tobacco, and a solitary palm.

Still continuing the descent, we had some very beautiful peeps of the country below, and even of the sea-coast; and within an hour of Lydda the hill country ceased, and we were once more in the rich fertile plains. The approach to the town is very pretty, through numerous gardens and fields of wheat and barley, the latter being ripe, and in some places reaped.

Our tents were pitched in a stubble-field, planted with olives, and near a large fountain, partly arched over, where the women were drawing water, and on the top of the wall of which the Mussulmans were performing their evening devotions.

Our muleteers are most clever in packing and pitching our tents; Mustapha is greatly preferable to Mohammed, of Desert memory, and wears a red overcoat made at Nablous, with, in some parts, gold, silver, and silk tissue intermixed.

May 17.—Left Lydda at half-past seven o'clock,

after breakfasting in the shade of our tent; the air warm, balmy, and delightful. We had a lovely ride, and passed the town situated upon a hill; the town of Ramlah on our left in the distance, and the blue hills of Judah behind us, forming a beautiful background to the richly cultivated plains of Sharon. The fields of barley were ready for the sickle, and were reaped, and were of the same boundless extent as those we had remarked before.

After passing two or three villages, the approach to Jaffa was striking. For more than two miles luxuriant gardens of lemon, orange, and pomegranate trees, defended by the usual cactus hedge, lined the road.

The town of Jaffa is on an eminence, sloping down directly to the sea; it has all the appearance of a thriving, bustling place; houses well built, and the bazaars crowded.

The Latin convent was reported to be full, so we were obliged to encamp outside the town, near the quarantine, on a high ridge, overlooking the Mediterranean on one side, and the extensive gardens and plain on the other. Our consul, Dr Assaad Kayat, is building an hotel close by, and proposes living in the upper story himself. In the afternoon we had a delightful walk on the beach, and found a variety of pretty shells and curious stones; the sandy cliffs were very picturesque; the Jerusalem cross, red, on a white ground, floats on the top of the Latin convent in the

town. There are several nice country-houses built here; one near us is the American consul's, with a lovely garden. There is a general illumination of these houses this evening, which has a very pretty effect. We hope to embark to-morrow morning.

CHAPTER IV.

BEYROUT—SMYRNA—CONSTANTINOPLE—MESSINA—
MARSEILLES.

THE *Tancred* steamer, which was to take us to Constantinople, coasting Syria and the shores of Asia Minor, came in early on Sunday morning; and we were obliged to go on board at nine o'clock, much to our regret, as it deprived us of the opportunity of attending Divine service, which is performed at Jaffa every Sunday by the resident missionary. Such a scene of confusion and dirt on board—anything but encouraging after our Bedouin existence. Crowds of pilgrims pouring in continually: one side of the deck entirely given up to them; and there we saw the hadjis lying, head and tail, on their mattresses as close as possible. The Eastern ladies, with their slaves and children, beautifully dressed, sipping coffee and smoking chibouks, appearing perfectly at home; a sirocco wind made the heat quite overpowering; and a perpetual struggle was going on between the captain and passengers as to the admission of huge bales,

which the latter wished to bring as personal luggage : it was two o'clock in the afternoon before all these matters were settled, and we at length got under way, and sixteen hours' run brought us to Beyrout ; but, alas ! it was the dead of night when we passed Mount Carmel—a glimpse of which, at least, we had fondly hoped to catch by moonlight. As the steamer stopped twenty-four hours at Beyrout, we landed, and took up our quarters at the hotel Bellevue in the town ; so clean, cool, and comfortable, that we felt like new creatures, from the contrast to the steamer, and greatly regretted that these luxuries were only to be enjoyed for a day. This hotel was certainly the best we had seen in the East, both for living and accommodation. Though fine, the weather was hazy, so that we had not a clear view of the “goodly mountain,” which towered grandly over one side of the town. The “superieure” of the convent of St Vincent de Paul at Beyrout had been our fellow-passenger from Jaffa, and, at her request, we visited the school attached to the convent in the afternoon ; the service was going on in the chapel, and the sisters sung very sweetly ; and we observed that a great many native girls were present ; and also saw there a Druse woman, wearing the horn covered with a white veil as a head-dress.

It was a lovely morning when we re-embarked at Beyrout, and we were charmed with our last view of the town and surrounding scenery. The landing-place

was crowded with gay figures ; the ruined castle and beautiful gardens lay nestled beneath the mountain, and we all agreed that the beauty of Beyrout had been much underrated. The whole day we were passing the range of Lebanon, and could distinguish the snow lying in the hollows near the summits ; very bold rocks beneath ; and almost before we were aware of it, we reached Tripoli, well built and beautifully situated ; and the sunset lights and shades were most exquisite, contrasting with the brown and white tints of the town.

A reef of rocks, with a beacon on the outermost, stretches for four miles to the westward, rendering the entrance of the bay dangerous at night. Tripoli itself is a mile inland, and the old ruined castle dates probably from the time of the crusaders.

Latakia, an eight hours' run from Tripoli ; the town is a mile from the shore, pleasantly situated on the slope of a small hill forming the head of the bay—a fine situation for a large city. We much regretted not being able to land ; but there was no shelter obtainable from the midday sun, in the shape of a tree or the humblest *café*.

Alexandretta (Scanderoon),—a beautiful spot, under high hills, descending down almost to the water's edge, and green to their summits, greatly reminding one of the boldest scenery of the Scotch hills and *lakes*, especially as the bay was smooth as glass, and

almost entirely landlocked. A small plain, immediately to the westward of the town, very verdant, but the source of fever; the latter so prevalent that it is dangerous to sleep on shore, or even to land for a few hours; and yet the marsh could easily be drained; the only thing requisite being to clean out the bed of a small river, which now overflows and stagnates, instead of emptying itself into the sea. The distant range of Taurus was distinctly visible to the N.W. In the saloon this afternoon the thermometer marked 79°.

Mersina, eight hours from Scanderoon, lies at the foot of the Taurus range, which, with its snowy peaks, bounds the province. It is a small, pretty-looking town, with its houses, Italian fashion, flat-roofed; but the same desolating fever prevails here as at Scanderoon, and from the same cause: the mouth of the Cydnus is choked up, and its course is one long marsh of twenty miles up to Tarsus, generating disease. How different the aspect of the country from what it must have been in St Paul's time, when Tarsus was one of the most renowned cities of Asia, and the fertility of the environs unrivalled! And yet the land might easily regain its ancient splendour and health, if only blessed with a good government. One of our fellow-passengers, who is a merchant here, had suffered from the fever twenty months out of twenty-four.

Shortly after leaving Mersina, we passed the ruins

of Pompeiopolis, and saw the faint outline of the island of Cyprus—a beautiful sunset, and a splendid starlight night, realising one's idea of the glory of such an hour and such a sight in the East.

Still coasting Asia Minor, forty-five hours' steaming brought us to Rhodes, and the three hours which the vessel stopped here enabled us to visit the principal points of interest. Passing close to a strong tower, we landed, amidst a crowd of gaily-dressed people, in Greek costume, and proceeded up the grass-grown "Rue des Chevaliers," over its foot-worn broken pavement. This street contains the albergos of the knights, with their escutcheons still so fresh, that one could scarcely believe that more than three hundred years had elapsed since the owners had departed. Beautifully-sculptured doorways, windows, and various mouldings attested the former magnificence of these dwellings. After passing under a fine archway, at the upper end of the street, we entered the church of St John, and traced some of the ruined tombstones on the pavement, and admired the woodwork of the ceiling and other parts of the building, which are in wonderful preservation. From the fortifications beautiful views are obtained of the sea and mountains of the mainland, which last were of an ethereal colour. The afternoon was spent in threading the lovely islands of the Ægean Sea, with exquisite prospects in the distance on either hand. The evening presented

never-to-be-forgotten sights of glory and loveliness. A transparent appearance on the distant islands, just at sunset, and the effects of departing light, sparkling and glowing on the horizon, and touching the jagged peaks of Cos with fiery fingers; the rich purple hue of the island and the last flood of glory; the deep bands of pink, spreading comet-wise over the sky, and casting a strong, claret-coloured hue over the sea,—formed altogether an indescribably magnificent scene. As a fellow-passenger remarked, “The only fault we can find with this navigation is, that we have too much to admire.”

The entrance into the bay of Smyrna was particularly fine; and, owing to extensive sandbanks, we had to make a great detour before reaching the town itself, the appearance of which rather disappointed us as seen from the sea. No harbour, properly speaking, but an open roadstead, exposed to all winds but the east; and it is often difficult both to land and re-embark when the west wind sets in strong; of which fact we had personal experience, having to row a long way before finding a spot fit for landing free from the heavy surf; and in returning on board, with the wind in our teeth, we shipped a few seas. The houses in the European bazaar of Smyrna overhung the street in the upper story, and looked as spruce as those of a German or Swiss town. The open doors admitted a view of the corridors, which are spacious, and ornamented with

flowers; and the guests are received in the rooms at either side. There is only one decent hotel in the whole place.*

The morning after leaving Smyrna we were in Besika Bay, our eyes resting on the plains of Troy, the graves of the godlike heroes visible along the shore; and, entering the Dardanelles, just after we had passed the beautiful castles of Europe and Asia, we stopped to let out the Mytilene passengers, whom the boatmen would not land last night. Close under the castle, on the Asiatic side, we saw villages, with sloping, red-tiled roofs, and cypress burial-grounds; and about six in the evening reached Gallipoli, looking perfectly lovely in the bright sunshine. There were picturesque ruins visible, and the town seemed intermixed with gardens. A French steamer was lying off the harbour, and an encampment of our "brave allies" on the hill. We had a good view of the islands in the Sea of Marmora, in the clear delightful air; and the glow of sunset was very rich.

Thursday, May 29.—We reached Constantinople the eleventh day after embarking at Jaffa; and right glad were we to bid adieu to the *Tancred*, with its crowd of pilgrims, squalling children, dark gloomy cabins, and confined quarter-deck. But amidst these

* The bay is famous for the size and flavour of its prawns, which are really as large as crawfish.

drawbacks, let us not forget to mention the friends who had accompanied us from Beyrout, and in whose society we had spent so many pleasant hours. Suffice it to say, that the remembrance of their constant kindness and good-humour will be inseparably connected with this part of our tour.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

The approach to it from the Sea of Marmora was magnificent. It was curious to see the imperial city rising gradually and beautifully from the sea, and extending itself as we approached. Seraglio Point, crowned by the Mosque of St Sophia and Achmet, with their numerous minarets—the new palace and cemeteries—Scutari hospitals and the ambassadors' houses at Pera—the graceful caiques and the noble ships of all nations in the Bosphorus—presented a view of unrivalled splendour. Our steamer, owing to the rapidity of the current, came in contact with a vessel at anchor, and the collision was frightful. On we went, crashing through everything, breaking her bowsprit, and tearing away her shrouds, only receiving slight damage ourselves, and cast anchor close to a ship full of French troops. This being the anniversary of our Queen's birthday, all the English vessels were displaying their colours and firing salutes. In the evening we saw some blue lights and rockets ascending from the harbour, and the few lights on the

minarets and in the large buildings looked as if they had descended from the starlit heavens. The sound of arabas and carts in the streets, struck peculiarly on the ear, after the silence of other Eastern towns, to which we had been accustomed.

Friday, May 30.—To-day we made our first trip in a caique, which is not at all the dangerous boat it is represented to be. It is a canoe fore and aft, gliding without a ripple; the passengers, reclining on a divan at the bottom of the boat, act as ballast, and the sensation is perfectly delicious. We seemed to fly along the water, and soon arrived at the Sultan's new palace, the entrance to which is magnificent, the white marble one mass of elegant devices. We were refused admittance, so contented ourselves with rowing along the vast front of the building. The gates of gold and green produced a bright effect, and the blinds before the Hareem windows had landscapes painted on them.

We rowed on past a ruinous palace which had belonged to the mother of the Sultan, and were delighted with the shores of the Bosphorus, but were obliged to return in order not to miss seeing the Sultan leave his palace and embark on board his gilded caique, manned by eighteen rowers. The moment he placed himself under his canopy, cannon were fired and music struck up, and the flagship, *Queen*, saluted

him as he passed. After luncheon we went to the top of the tower of Galata, from whence there is a magnificent view of Constantinople—a gorgeous regal city—the houses embosomed in verdure; and though numbers are built entirely of wood, they are extremely picturesque. The Genoese chose an excellent situation for commercial purposes; all the merchants' houses are now clustered beneath the tower upon the Golden Horn. It was strikingly beautiful to look down upon Stamboul, with its splendid mosques and seraglio, and Scutari with the cemeteries. We went along the main street of Pera, full of French shops and restaurants, and saw the bare sunny spot where the band plays, above the churchyard; the view of the opposite shore being the only attraction.

Beyond the French hospital there is a sort of café, where we rested, and had another fine view up the Bosphorus towards the Black Sea, and passing another cemetery we returned to our hotel (l'Europe). In the evening we went in a caique to see the illuminations in honour of the Sultan's wedding a new wife. It was a dark night, but the mosques were brilliantly lighted; the Sultan's cypher was over the one in which he was praying, and an illuminated "S" over St Sophia, and the Sultan's caique over a tower in Stamboul. There were thousands of people on the water, but the greatest order was preserved; the fireworks were very grand, bursting high up, and scattering a brilliant

coloured shower, revealing everything clearly in the dazzling light, and bringing out the buildings in strong relief. The large French and English ships had lights in every direction, besides throwing up many rockets, and looked like huge creatures reclining on the water; a band was also playing on board the French corvette. We returned before the Sultan emerged from the mosque, wishing to avoid the rush and confusion attending the dispersion of a large crowd, but from our balcony we had a side view of the demonstration which occurred at the long expected appearance of his Majesty.

Saturday, May 31.—Started in a caique, at ten o'clock for Stamboul. The trees and grass looked so temptingly refreshing that we reposed for a while during our ascent to the "Seraglio."

We had a magnificent view from a little formal garden near the old palace, built by Constantine, and then walked along the colonnades, and admired the verd antique pillars, encaustic tiles, and Eastern appearance of the pile of buildings.

We passed through the noble gateway, where the Sultan alights after visiting St Sophia, and saw some curious tombs and prostrate pillars inside the railing of the mosque. With some difficulty we were allowed to enter the door, where a winding and gentle ascent leads to the gallery running round the upper part of

the building; there were remains of mosaic ceilings partly painted over, and we could look down on the celebrated pillars of verd antique and porphyry, the spoils of other temples. To our great disappointment, we were not allowed to visit the lower part of the mosque, as the peculiar services of Ramazan were going on, and our guide had misled us on the subject, and allowed the time to pass by in which we might have been admitted.

We then went to the mosque of Achmet, its white minarets peeping out amidst the thick foliage of the plane-trees; the interior of the building contains some fine marble columns; but the wretched little lamps, filled with oil, present a strong contrast to the noble proportions of the building.

At the Hippodrome we saw an obelisk, with a pedestal covered with sculptured figures, and a Latin inscription beneath in favour of the Emperor Theodosius; also, the famous twisted column in bronze, formed of three serpents of different sizes, whose *heads* have been destroyed, and supposed to have been brought from Delphi; lastly, *the* burnt column in the distance, which is the oldest relic of imperial times. We then descended into the famous cistern or well of Constantine, which contains a thousand and one pillars; and there, in the subdued light of the cool grotto, we forgot the blazing sun, and the fatigues of sight-seeing, and could have leaned over that balcony

for a longer space of time than was considered necessary. Obligated to remember that life is real, life is earnest, we tore ourselves away reluctantly, and passing under the old Roman gateway, made our way to the burial-place of the Sultan's father. Putting on our slippers outside the porch, we went along the carpeted corridor, with divans on either side, and through little ante-rooms; and in a beautiful circular saloon, the windows of which were hung with muslin curtains, the niches filled with inlaid caskets, and the Korans placed on elegant folding-desks, were the coffins of the royal family,—the turboosh of the late sovereign being surmounted with splendid diamonds, and shawls of richest manufacture covering the poor remains. Leaving the building, we passed into the garden with great iron railings, and looked covetously on some of the brilliant flowers—laurels had been trellised outside, producing a very pretty effect. Thence to the bazaars—these wondrous long covered passages, shewing, in beautiful vistas under the arches, and between the pillars on either side, the gay, motley, picturesque mass of moving human beings, belonging to every nation under heaven. We bargained for slippers, silks, looking-glasses, and embroidery, until past five o'clock, and were so excited with the heat of contest, that biscuits and lemonade were forgotten until we were nearly fainting.

Returning to the water's edge, we saw a Hareem

descending from their arabas and entering the caiques, accompanied by great bundles of purchases from the Bazaar. The ladies came shuffling along in their transparent veils and awkward slippers, some of them gazing right merrily at our gentleman, as they were hurried past by their lord and master. Reclining at the bottom of our Stamboul caïque, we luxuriated in the delicious air of evening, and deplored the sad necessity of returning to our hotel for dinner.

Sunday.—A day of rest. Attended Divine service at the British Embassy; and in the afternoon took a quiet row on the Bosphorus, enjoying the bounding of our graceful skiff, and the meeting of steamers and vessels of every description, from the small pleasure-boat to the large screw-frigate, moved along so mysteriously by the strong current. Passing the Yellow Palace of the Sultan, opposite the marvel of beauty he is now constructing, we were cleverly guided amongst the currents close along the Italian shores, admiring the pretty villages, the houses of the Jewish merchants, and the thousand nameless beauties of this fascinating scenery.

Monday, June 2.—Our last day at Constantinople, to which we bade adieu with unfeigned regret, though thankful that we had been enabled to pay it even such a flying visit as ours had been. We embarked

in the afternoon in the *Mersey*, a large screw-steamer bound direct to Marseilles, having on board six hundred French artillerymen, and their officers, returning from the Crimea, besides some of the latter belonging to our own service, so that we were, if possible, more crowded than on board the *Tancred*.

We retraced our previous route by the Sea of Marmora and the Dardanelles, favoured by most beautiful weather. The setting sun had the glowing effect which is ever remarkable in these luxurious regions; and as we moved south we were fanned by the warm breath of the Levant, so different from the sharp northerly breeze which mostly prevailed during our stay at Stamboul.

Wednesday Morning.—In 40 hours from Constantinople, we were entering the Bay of Salamis, eagerly watching for the Acropolis—the same beautiful effects of distance along the shores and upon the islands of Greece which we had previously observed. At length the ruins were plainly discernible, and then, by an intricate passage, we entered the harbour of the Piræus, which is perfectly landlocked.

After a hasty breakfast, we lost no time in rowing ashore, anxious to avail ourselves to the utmost of the four hours granted to us. Our Greek coachman drove the small carriage we had hired

full speed across the dusty plain, resting half-way at a station where refreshments can be procured, and in forty minutes we reached Athens, a shabby modern town—King Otho's palace looking like a large barrack. A little beyond it are the ruins of the Temple of Jupiter Olympus, its columns so magnificent in their decay. There are but few remaining; and one that is lying prostrate separated itself into the numberless blocks which were so artistically joined together. Re-entering our carriage, we proceeded through an arch of the most elegant construction, and soon reached the spot where commenced the ascent to the Acropolis. The sun was intensely hot, and there was sufficient wind to prevent our enjoying the protection of an umbrella. Soon we looked down on the Areopagus on Mars' Hill, and up to the great gate of the Propylæon, wide at its base, and narrowing gradually like that of an Egyptian temple.

The Parthenon was truly splendid, the columns imposing, and the sculptures lying about in rich profusion, testifying to the elaborate elegance of its ornaments. We saw the famous Caryatides, and the Temple of Victory, with its celebrated bas-reliefs; but there was no time for reflection. We cast a glance upon the site of the Ampitheatre, looked upon the diminutive territory of the ancient republic, and, hastening back to the inglorious modern city, refreshed ourselves for a while, and then visited the Temple of

Theseus, the most perfect now existing, and were shewn a collection of sculptures inside its walls. Exquisite outlines and beautiful draperies distinguished many of the figures, and outside the building were the white marble chairs of the Areopagus. We returned to our steamer, thankful for even this slight glance of the glories of bygone times.

Messina, 56 hours from the Piræus. A smooth sea, and scarcely a breath of wind, during the whole passage until we reached the Straits; and then such a strong breeze from the north-west, that the steamer could scarcely make headway, so that it was past midnight when we anchored in the harbour, instead of eight in the evening.

We had a couple of hours' ramble on shore the following morning (Saturday) before breakfast, in company with a French artillery officer, whose forefathers had been knights of St John, and who kindly volunteered to act as cicerone. The beauty of the irregular hills rising above the town is very great, and the Calabrian shore indistinctly seen through the mist. The handsome houses, well-paved streets, long-horned oxen, and fine donkeys, attracted our attention. In the Cathedral there are handsome rows of pillars, fine mosaics, marble pulpit, and interesting monuments. From thence we went to a convent chapel, most richly ornamented with mosaics, and covered with frescoes—quite a little gem—and from

the platform in front the view is very fine. The public gardens are small, but pretty, and the arrangements for music are ample.

Our departure from Messina took place about ten o'clock, and the scenery in the Straits was beautiful. Convents and shining towns on a narrow ledge beneath the precipitous ridges, and Scylla and Charybdis smiling on either hand—the former, a small town on a rocky projection on the Italian coast; the latter, an imperceptible whirlpool, over which a noble vessel was gliding in perfect safety. The north-west wind increased to a gale before the evening, and lasted without cessation for two days, until we reached the Straits of Bonifacio, where it suddenly died away, and from thence, twenty-four hours' steaming through a dead calm brought us safely to Marseilles, where we landed just three months to a day from our departure on our Eastern tour.

THE END.

















